

Agile Working Policy

Status: APPROVED

Policy Lead:	Executive Director – Business Support
Owned By:	People & Culture Lead
Date Approved:	02 December 2025
Approved By:	Executive Team
Review Date:	02 December 2028
Regulatory / Legislative Considerations/ References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Rights Act 1996 • Working Time Regulations 1998
Other Documents to be read in conjunction with this policy:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to Disconnect Policy • Lone Working Policy • BHA Colleague Handbook • BHA Health & Safety Management System • GDPR Policy • ICT Usage Policy • Recruitment and Selection Policy • Working Time Regulations October 1998 • The Flexible Working Regulations, enacted through the Children’s and Families Act 2014



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Scottish Charity No.: SC042342 Registered Office: 55 Newtown Street, Duns, TD11 3AU

Policy Title:	Agile Working Policy
Purpose / Aim of policy:	To enable Berwickshire Housing Association colleagues to carry out duties in an efficient and agile way whilst ensuring all business needs and the delivery of services to our customers is maintained at all times.
Scope of Policy:	Set out the guidance on Agile Working at Berwickshire Housing Association.
Definitions:	What is Agile Working, what are the differing work styles at BHA and can Agile Working be applied to the different work styles.
Specific detail related to each strand in the scope:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of Agile Working • Work styles • Allocation of roles to work styles
Approval Source:	Executive Team
Equality Impact Assessment:	This policy aims to make clear that where applicable to a role, Agile Working can support reasonable adjustments if required by employees, resulting in a positive impact for the individual.
Sustainability Assessment:	Not applicable
Partnership Assessment:	Not applicable
Glossary of Terms	Set out in policy
Risk Implications:	As set out in the policy

1. Introduction

The Agile Working Policy sets out an overall framework, enabling Berwickshire Housing Association colleagues to carry out duties in a more efficient and agile way whilst ensuring all business needs and the delivery of services to our customers is maintained at all times. This framework, as set out by this policy, provides a medium for consistency and fair practice when implementing and maintaining a hybrid working environment.

Definitions that apply to this Policy

Agile Working	Agile working incorporates dimensions of time and place flexibility, but also involves doing work differently focusing on performance and outcomes.
Hybrid Working	Hybrid working is the term used to describe how employees can work flexibly from different locations and at different times, whether it is from a BHA building (Hub); Home or within the community (Roam).
Flexible Working	Flexible working is the term used to describe the different ways in which employees can change their working pattern including part-time hours, condensed hours, job sharing, annualised hours as some examples.
Work Styles	The different work-styles describe and define the mobility and flexibility of location for each individual employee.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy will enable both managers and colleagues to gain a better understanding of agile working and understand the basic principles, which can then be considered and applied to specific roles.

The strategic aim of this Agile Working Policy is to move away from a historic hierarchical, presenteeism culture to one where work is about what you do, not where you do it.

3. Key Points

BHA recognise the need to develop modern working practices to enable employees to maximise their performance and productivity whilst maintaining a good work life balance. In addition, new technologies are making it easy to access information remotely, working from a variety of locations, whilst promoting a more joined up service and presenting new opportunities. To ensure that BHA's Vision, Values and aims become a reality we must also continue to attract, develop and retain high quality colleagues.

Agile working is the term used to describe how employees can work flexibly from any location and at different times, whether it is from a BHA building, within the community and client sites or from home.

Agile working across BHA empowers employees to work with their manager to find new and better ways of working in order to maximise productivity whilst also ensuring that a modernised working environment for employees will deliver service improvements for the customer.

It is accepted that not all roles in BHA can be categorised as totally flexible but there is still scope in many cases for some form of hybrid working. The different ways in which agile working can be undertaken is dependent on the demands and needs of the role, the individual's preferences and circumstances and the service an employee is engaged in. It can be possible, with careful planning for employees to carry out their duties from a variety of different locations.

All posts have been assessed and have one of the following "work-styles" applied to the job role. Postholders can discuss with their Manager how agile working can work for that job role.

- Fixed (a set location)
- Home, Hub, Roam (HHR)

4. Principles of Agile working

Managers and their teams are given the flexibility to think creatively about how services can be delivered embracing agile working. In order for agile working to be successful within teams, a mutual agreement must be reached between colleagues and their manager with regard to the logistics of the agile working arrangements.

When considering the practicalities of agile working and in particular during initial discussions between manager and employee, both parties must be mindful that some options may not be operationally practical.

There must be no compromise of health and safety, information governance, security of equipment or quality of service delivery when agreeing to agile working.

Managers will recognise that employees, irrespective of their agreed work style, need rest periods and downtime. Employees have a right to privacy out of hours and to be able to separate their working and home lives. **BHA's Right to Disconnect Policy sets this out in more detail.**

Employees will take greater responsibility for managing their time effectively in return for greater flexibility.

The management of outcomes will underpin the success of agile working. Managers will ensure work programmes are planned and agreed and all team members are clear about how performance will be managed. Performance Objectives and KPIs must be monitored as part of the 1 to 1 and Performance Management framework to ensure outcomes are achieved.

ICT/equipment is a critical element of successful hybrid working therefore BHA will ensure that employees are provided with the most appropriate tools to support hybrid working.

Housekeeping rules are paramount to the success of agile working and clear guidance will be produced for managers and employees to cover such items as time management, open calendars, making contact etc.

This way of working may be reviewed if the employee:

- Does not live the BHA values
- Has above average levels of absenteeism
- Has conduct issues leading to disciplinary action
- The performance or quality of work of the individual is not up to expectations
- Demonstrates a lack of engagement with the company

5. Allocation of roles to work-styles

All existing roles have been reviewed and work-styles assigned to each role. Any new roles will be assessed by the manager to determine the work style.

The recruitment process will accommodate discussion around work-style for new appointments.

Although some roles which are suitable for agile working will not necessarily work standard office hours (unless the role dictates this), it is essential to plan and agree a work programme for others (e.g. the manager, the rest of the team and colleagues) so they are aware of the individual's working pattern, where they are located and know when and how to contact them. The pattern of work must be agreed in advance allowing employees who are using their homes as part of their agile working arrangements, to have a right to privacy out of hours and be able to separate their working and home lives.

Agile working allows employees to manage their domestic responsibilities e.g. delivery of goods, assisting with childcare arrangements (for example allowing parents to complete the school run and make up their time later in the evening), providing this does not have a negative impact on the individual's ability to carry out their work, or upon the delivery of services to our customers.

Employees must note that the ability to work from home is not a substitute for sickness or childcare or similar carer responsibilities. It is the colleagues responsibility to ensure adequate provision is in place, should they be able to work from home.

Employees are able to request a change of work-style as part of their regular performance reviews. This policy does not cover contractual changes to working hours which is dealt with under a request for flexible working **[Refer to the Employee Handbook – Flexible Working Policy]**

6. Work-styles

In all cases a work-style has been determined by the Manager and will be dependent on the needs of the service; the needs of the employee and the requirements of the role.

Fixed workers

Employees who:

- Spend most of their time working at a fixed location
- Require particular equipment or furniture to carry out their role or work effectively
- If it is not practical for the person to work in the HHR work-style.
- If the right to work to the work-style of HHR has been removed.

HHR workers

Employees who:

- Do not require to be in a fixed location to provide a service to our customers.
- Spend most of their time working on the move, accessing information, assessing customers, carrying out inspections, regulatory activity.
- Will come into the hub office for specific reasons or meetings.

7. General rules

7.1 Clear Desk Policy

As desks in BHA sites may be used by any member of BHA, it's important to ensure a clear-desk policy to protect data and confidentiality.

Colleagues must remove any personal information or information about customers, contractors etc. or keep it in a locked drawer or filing cabinet when they vacate any desk. All food items, cutlery, crockery etc. should be removed, washed and put away when you vacate any desk.

Ensure your data is safe in **every** setting:

- When working at a desk especially if using paper documents please ensure that no paperwork is left on the desk as this could be a potential data breach risk.
- Ensure when you leave your PC unattended that you lock your screen.
- Ensure your PC is not left unattended in a public area as this could be subject to theft.
- Ensure the Wi-Fi you are using is secure.
- Be aware of people observing your screen – looking over your shoulder.

7.2 Reasonable adjustments

BHA will of course continue to support reasonable adjustment requirements, as recommended by an Occupational Health specialist and agreed with the Line Manager where this has been deemed necessary. This may include a specialist chair, adjustable

desk/workstation and/or other equipment. Each situation will be considered on a case by case basis.

8. Management considerations

8.1 Health & Safety The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA) places specific duties on employers, self-employed people and employees; with employers having a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees.

In addition, employees and managers who, even occasionally work from different locations have individual responsibilities under Health & Safety Regulations.

Employees are responsible for ensuring that their work stations are suitable for their needs. Employees should not put themselves in a position where their working exacerbates any health condition. Manager and colleagues need to agree on a number of Health & Safety practicalities and assess the potential risks, including but not exclusive to:

- Lone working
- Personal Safety
- Information Governance
- Safety and security of buildings
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE)
- Fire and safety
- Security

8.2 Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

Employees will be advised by the Compliance Manager in advance of scheduled PAT which ensures they have sufficient time to bring all portable equipment to the Hub for testing. It is the Manager's responsibility with the support of their colleagues, to ensure all electrical team/shared equipment is tested on an annual basis.

8.3 Personal Safety

Employees must never arrange for meetings to take place in their own home with service users.

8.4 Information governance / GDPR

Managers and employees must complete mandatory e-learning on GDPR and Cyber Awareness and are personally responsible for the security of all data held in paper and electronic form. Colleagues must comply with all relevant legislation, policies and procedures irrespective of the work-style allocated to their role.

8.5 Performance Management

Managers must discuss with employees the basis of any agile working arrangement and this will include agreed working pattern, expected work outputs, arrangements for communication and robust diary management.

Regular 1 to 1s must take place between the Manager and the employee to discuss Performance Objectives, KPIs, workloads, wellbeing, outputs, outcomes and maintain structured discussion and feedback. Employees must attend Head Office on BHA's anchor day (Wednesday) - this will be reviewed annually or if there is any significant change to working practice or environment. All colleagues must also attend Head Office when requested for any other work related meetings or activities. Electronic diaries must be open and up to date in real time.

Where an employee's performance is not acceptable, the Manager can amend or withdraw the employee from agile working arrangements as part of a performance action plan to support necessary improvements. **[Refer to BHA's Capability Procedure in the Employee Handbook]**

Any type of agile working arrangement needs to be reviewed regularly to ensure that both services and individual needs are being met.

8.6 Time Management Arrangements

The full-time working week at BHA is 35 hours over a five-day period unless there is a shift/rota system in place or employees have reduced hours contracts. Employees are expected to manage their time so that the Customer Access Window is covered by their team.

BHA is working on trust, therefore should any employee be found to be abusing this trust, they will be subject to BHA's disciplinary procedure, which can be found in the Employee Handbook.

8.7 Travel Expenses

You are expected to meet the costs of travelling to and from your normal place of work as per your Statement of Terms (contract). Travel claims will be from the first hub / site / tenant's home visited on any given day until the last hub / site / tenant's home before the journey home. If your first visit is a longer journey than your usual journey to work then you would claim the additional mileage only.

Casual mileage is paid to colleagues who use their own cars for business either when there is no company cars available or if it is more practical to use your own car. The rate is currently set at 45 p per mile.

9 Impact on Employment

Considerations must be given to the legal implications associated with agile working. Below summarises the key points:

- It is essential that Managers consult with the People & Culture Lead when a significant change is being considered to an employee's work-style. Advice can then be given on the impact of the working pattern according to current legislation.
- Agile working can be advantageous to those with caring responsibilities and those with medical problems or disabilities, particularly when considering reasonable work adjustments, in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010). However individuals must be mindful that as previously outlined, agile working is not a substitute for childcare or other caring responsibilities.

The Working Time Regulations which places restriction on working excessive hours came into force on 1 October 1998 and must be considered in respect of agile working.

The Flexible Working Regulations, enacted through the Children's and Families Act 2014, gives all employees a statutory right to apply for flexible working. The implementation of agile working therefore supports this Act and more details of the Right to Apply are set out in the Employee Handbook.

BHA must comply with the **General Data Protection Regulations 2018**.

10 Risk and Insurance

BHA's insurance will cover third party and employer liability risk and cover BHA's equipment in the workplace and at home but will not cover the home or any equipment provided by the employee. A person who works from home must inform their insurers that they are homebased working if it is not part of their home cover.

11 Responsibilities of the Manager

People Managers responsibilities are:

- To be responsible for their own and team member's adherence to this policy.
- To regularly review the agile working arrangements for employees within their area of responsibility, in line with the policy.
- To ensure that all employees within their area of responsibility understand the agile working policy.
- To ensure the agile working concept of managing by outcomes has been fully explained to all employees within their area of responsibility and appropriate methods to monitor output have been mutually agreed and Performance Objectives and/or KPIs are agreed each year at the April 1 to 1.
- To ensure maximum flexibility, openness and constructiveness in relation to discussions and agreements about agile working with employees within their area of responsibility, whilst remaining focused on the needs of the service.
- To ensure all employees are aware of their responsibility to adhere to agile working housekeeping rules.
- To ensure all employees are aware of their responsibility to adhere to the existing BHA policies and undertake training linked to agile working.
- To ensure all the necessary actions in relation to process have been completed in order to facilitate agile working.

12 Responsibilities of Employees

Individual employee responsibilities are:

- To ensure they are familiar with the agile working policy.
- To comply with all conditions and guidance within the agile working policy for example regarding confidentiality, data protection, health and safety, working hours etc. in a reasonable, constructive and appropriate manner.
- To have joint responsibility with their manager in agreeing their level of agility and how they will carry out their role in a more agile way.
- To ensure flexibility, openness and constructiveness in relation to discussions and agreements about agile working with their manager, whilst remaining focused on the needs of the service.
- To adhere to the agile working housekeeping rules.
- To adhere to the existing BHA policies and undertake training linked to agile working.
- To liaise with their manager for advice or clarification as required.
- To ensure all the necessary actions in relation to process have been completed in order to facilitate agile working.

13 Related Policies and Guidance

- BHA Employee Handbook
- BHA Health & Safety Toolkit
- GDPR Policy
- ICT Usage Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Right to Disconnect Policy