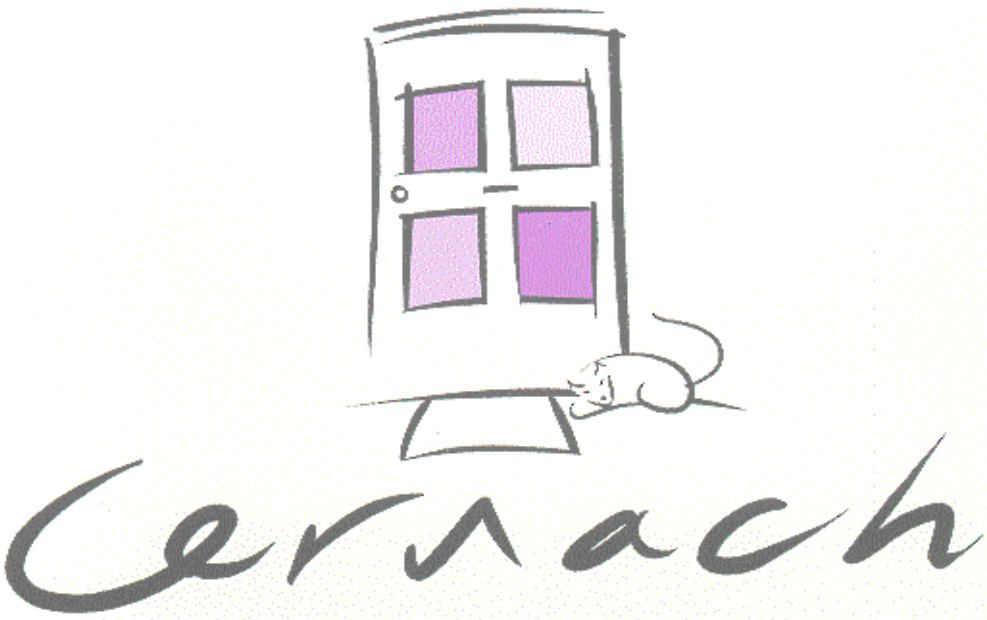


Policy on
Recruitment and selection

Date approved	:	December 2026
Latest review date:		December 2030

Policy on recruitment and selection

1. Introduction

1.1 Cernach Housing Association recognises that its employees are its greatest asset and that it relies on the skills, competencies and contribution of all employees to deliver high-quality services to all its tenants and customers. The Association is therefore committed to the recruitment, selection and appointment of the right people to meet the needs of the organisation.

1.2 This policy provides a framework for fair, transparent, inclusive, and legally compliant recruitment, selection, and onboarding practices. Recruitment decisions will be based on merit, objective assessment and role related criteria as set out in the job description and person specification. To achieve this, equality and diversity practices will be integrated into every stage of the recruitment and selection process.

1.3 The Association will promote equality, inclusion, accessibility, candidate experience and transparency throughout the process. The Association has an equality and human rights policy that underpins all of its work. The application of the equality and diversity policy is implicit within this policy statement.

1.4 The recruitment and selection procedures will be in accordance with current statutory regulations and will reflect best practice.

1.5 Any employee or Committee member involved in the recruitment and selection of employees will receive the relevant training and guidance including the importance of equality of opportunity and the avoidance of discrimination.

2. Aims of the policy

2.1 The aims of this policy are:

- To recruit and select the best candidate for every vacancy
- To ensure that access to employment opportunity is based on fair, objective and job-related criteria
- To monitor and measure the effectiveness of the Association's recruitment and selection practices
- To reflect the Association's professionalism through the implementation of the recruitment and selection process.
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3. Principles

3.1 This policy will be operated within the following principles:

- Be clear and understood by all employees
- Be fair and equitable and non-discriminatory
- Reflect the needs of the organisation
- Remain confidential amongst relevant parties
- Reflect statutory requirements and best practice
- Recognise, welcome and promote diversity amongst the workforce

4. Legal & Regulatory Compliance

4.1 The Association is committed to carrying out recruitment, selection and onboarding activities in a lawful, fair, transparent, and ethical manner. Recruitment arrangements will be regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with current legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice. This includes the following but not limited to: -

- **Employment Rights Act 2025** - Supports fair recruitment and employment practices, including the provision of written particulars of employment and adherence to statutory employment protections.

- **Equality Act 2010** - Protects individuals from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of protected characteristics. Recruitment decisions should be based solely on role-related criteria, and reasonable adjustments should be considered where required.

- **Immigration, Asylum & Nationality Act 2006**- Requires employers to verify an individual's legal right to work in the UK before employment commences. Right to work checks should be conducted consistently and in accordance with Home Office requirements.

- **UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018** - Regulates how personal information is collected, stored, used, and retained. Candidate information must be processed fairly, lawfully, securely, and only for legitimate recruitment

4.2 The Association operates within the regulatory framework set out by the Scottish Housing Regulator, including Standards of Governance and Financial Management. This policy has regard to the following standard and outcome:

- Standard 5 - *The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity*

4.3 Cernach Housing Association will act ethically and conduct its affairs with honesty and integrity and aims to avoid conflicts of interest. HR advice will be sought on any legislative issues from employment law advisors.

5. Equality and human rights

5.1 The Association's Equality and Human Rights policy, outlines our commitment to promote a zero tolerance to unfair treatment or discrimination to any person or group of persons, particularly on the basis of any of the protected characteristics. This includes ensuring that everyone has equal access to information and services, and, to this end, the Association will make available a copy of this document in a range of alternative formats including large print, translated into another language or by data transferred to voice.

5.2 We are also aware of the potential for policies to inadvertently discriminate against an individual or group of individuals. To help tackle this and ensure that it does not occur, best practice suggests that organisations carry out Equality Impact assessments to help identify any part of a policy that may be discriminatory so that this can be addressed (please see section 6 of the Equality and Human Rights policy for more information).

5.3 In line with section 6 of the Equality and Human Rights Policy, the Association carried out an Equality Impact Assessment on this policy and no remedial action was identified as necessary. The full assessment is appended at the end of this policy. The Association's Equality and Human Rights policy, which was approved by the Committee in April 2025, outlines our commitment to promote a zero tolerance to unfair treatment or discrimination to any person or group of persons, particularly on the basis of any of the protected characteristics. This includes ensuring that everyone has equal access to information and services, and, to this end, the Association will make available a copy of this document in a range of alternative formats including large print, translated into another language or by data transferred to voice.

5.4 The Association aims to attract candidates from the widest possible pool of talent by ensuring recruitment practices are fair, inclusive, and accessible. Reasonable adjustments will be offered throughout the recruitment process, and recruitment arrangements will be reviewed regularly to identify and remove unnecessary barriers to employment. Vacancy advertisements, recruitment materials, and assessment methods will be designed to encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates and to support informed and equitable participation in the recruitment process.

5.5 Equality, diversity, and inclusion principles will be embedded at every stage of recruitment and selection. Individuals involved in recruitment activities will be expected to act fairly, objectively, and consistently and receive appropriate training or guidance on equality legislation, inclusive recruitment practices, unconscious bias, and accessibility. The Association recognises that a diverse workforce brings a broader range of perspectives, skills, and experiences, which can strengthen decision-making, enhance service delivery and better reflect the communities it serves.

6. Artificial Intelligence and Recruitment Technology

6.1 AI and recruitment technology may be used to support the following,

- Drafting recruitment materials, candidate correspondence, and assessment support.
- Support interview scheduling and administrative tasks.

6.2 AI must not make recruitment decisions without human oversight. Recruitment panels will remain responsible for all decisions. The Association will assess the risks of bias, discrimination, transparency, and privacy when using AI enabled tools and inform candidates where appropriate. AI generated outputs must be reviewed by an appropriately trained individual before being relied upon as part of the recruitment process.

6.3 Candidates may use AI tools to support application preparation. However, assessment activities should enable the organisation to evaluate an individual's own skills, knowledge, experience, and suitability for the role.

7. Vacancies

7.1 When a vacancy arises within the Association, the line manager and Director will consider whether:

- The vacancy requires to be filled
- New skills and responsibilities are needed
- The function, work patterns or new technology altered the job
- The tasks can be absorbed within an existing job role

7.2 The Corporate Services Officer will provide HR support.

8 Requirement to recruit employees

8.1 The need to recruit employees may be required for a number of reasons.

- Jobs may become vacant as a result of retirement, resignation, or dismissal
- The existing complement of employees or staff, for example, trainees or agents, may be required to be increased following a staff structure review or other similar exercise

8.2 In any recruitment exercise, the Association will define the process by which recruitment will be applied given the circumstances of the post.

9. Stages of recruitment

9.1 Following confirmation that recruitment is required, as described above, a timetable for recruitment will be drawn up by the line manager.

9.2 Where the post is to be retained as existing, the Director may agree to the recruitment process may commence immediately.

9.3 A job description and person specification will be prepared (or reviewed) which describes the tasks and responsibilities attached to the job and the experience, skills, aptitude, and knowledge required by the post holder. This will include a general description of the purpose and context of the post within the Association, the main duties and the scope of the job.

9.4 All job vacancies will be advertised, as appropriate, internally and externally at the same time. In the event that there is a re-structuring/redundancy situation within the Association, then internal advertising will be exhausted in the first instance and where there is more than one potentially redundant employee, the best candidate will be appointed using the selection process.

9.5 Where the post is temporary, such as to cover parental leave, long-term sick leave or to fulfil a specific task, then consideration will be given to advertising for a secondment – this may be in addition to or instead of the more traditional appointment route.

9.6 The salary applying to the post requires to be considered and will be applied from the appropriate EVH scale and spinal points.

9.7 The conditions of service will be the EVH standard conditions of services. Any variation to this must be agreed by the Management Committee.

10. Advertising

10.1 The Association will advertise all posts via a number of outlets. This would include EVH, SHN, *Indeed* and our own website. We will normally use EVH for advertising posts but will generally undertake the administration in-house. All applications received at the closing date will be passed to the line manager (the lead officer in the recruitment). Copies may also be shared with the Corporate Services Officer in their recruitment support role and, on request, the Association's Director or Head of Corporate Services.

10.2 The Association will conduct its own interviews and selection but may, if agreed by the Assurance Sub Committee or the Management Committee, engage the services of an external recruitment consultant (EVH or similar).

11. Recruitment information

11.1 Recruitment information will normally be available to download from the various advertising website, as well as the Association's own. The following information will be included in all application packs:

- Covering letter, including closing date information
- Job description
- Person specification
- Conditions of service
- Staff structure
- Application form for employment
- Equal opportunities statement and monitoring form

11.2 The Association will not consider applications returned after the closing date and CVs will not be considered.

11.3 To avoid discrimination, personal details will be detached/redacted. These will not be made available to the selection panel for either interview selection or following interviews.

12. The selection process

12.1 Only candidates meeting all of the essential criteria will be selected for interview.

12.2 The number of candidates selected for interview will vary depending on (i) the nature of the post and (ii) the number of candidates meeting all of the essential criteria. Irrespective of the number of candidates we wish to interview, anyone indicating that they wish to participate in the Job Interview Guarantee Scheme will automatically be invited to interview if they meet all of the essential criteria.

12.3 All members of the selection/interview panel will complete and sign pro formas and these will be retained on file for a period of six months after an appointment has been made.

12.4 The Interview panel will be as follows:

12.4.1 Senior posts (Grades 9 and 10)

- At least one senior staff member
- At least two Committee members
- Corporate Services Officer (servicing the panel)

12.4.2 Support and frontline posts (Grades 1 to 8)

- Any two members of the management team
- Up to two members of the Assurance Sub Committee if they so wish
- Corporate Services Officer (servicing the panel)

12.5 A scoring system will be used and the candidate with the highest score will be offered the appointment. Where two or more candidates attain identical scores, the interview panel will discuss the scores and agree a preferred candidate. If this is not possible, then the Association may conduct second interviews with the leading candidates.

12.6 **Recruitment of the senior officer**

12.6.1 When the Association is recruiting for the senior officer, there would normally be a longer lead in time than with other roles. Advertisements would be published in reputable platforms, for example, EVH, Scottish Housing News, *Indeed*, but this may also be extended to include national or regional press. The role and responsibilities of the post will be agreed by the Assurance Sub Committee with input from the outgoing Director and/or EVH.

12.6.2 There is likely to be a two-stage interview process with the interview panel ensuring the interests of Association are at the forefront of their decision-making. This could be, for example:

- A behavioural assessment day followed by an interview on a separate day ~~(this was the approach used in 2015)~~
- Psychometric testing following by an interview – with the results of the testing informing who is selected for interview
- A first interview followed by leading candidates being invited to a second interview

The Assurance Sub Committee will seek external advice on the interview approach; where behavioural assessment or psychometric testing is being used, the Association will seek input from an external advisor who is trained to interpret such tools.

12.6.3 We believe that the person with best knowledge of the day-to-day requirements of the Director post is the current incumbent. Unless there is a reason not to involve the outgoing Director, they will participate in the process in a strictly advisory capacity.

13. Offers of employment/appointment

13.1 All offers of employment, both oral and written, will be issued by the Director on the Association's behalf and will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references, original qualification certificates, proof of eligibility to work in the UK, satisfactory basic disclosure/PVG membership and criminal record checks. For senior management function roles this will include a Senior Management Function disqualification declaration form as set out in Scottish Charity law: Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2025, as amended by Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Act 2023.

13.2 Offers will state the start date, relevant salary scale, spinal point placing and arrangements for awarding increments. On increments, staff joining the Association on or before 31 December in a given year will be eligible for any applicable increments on 1 April the following year; staff joining between 1 January and 31 March will be eligible for their first applicable increment on 1 April of the next again year. For example:

- Someone joining on 5 November 2025 will be eligible for their first increment on 1 April 2026

- Someone joining on 21 January 2026 will be eligible for their first increment on 1 April 2027

The above principle will also apply to members of staff moving grades within the Association, such as via a promoted post.

13.3 Once the job offer has been accepted an interview outcome notification should be issued to unsuccessful interviewees. It is the intention of the Association where possible, to inform candidates of the outcome of the interview as quickly as possible.

14. References requests

14.1 References will be sought after a conditional offer of employment has been accepted. Reference will be made to the most current/recent employer/academic/voluntary or good character reference. Referees must not be related to the candidate.

15. Advising Candidates of the Outcome

15.1 When an offer of employment has been made, a member of the interview panel will advise the successful candidate by telephone first and in writing soon after. All unsuccessful interviewees will typically be advised of the outcome of their interviews by telephone or email. Constructive feedback on their performance can also be made available to them, if requested, by telephone.

16. Interview Expenses

16.1 Travel expenses will not be reimbursed.

17. Equal Opportunities Monitoring

17.1 As part of the organisation's recruitment process, equal opportunities monitoring will be undertaken from any completed equal opportunities forms and reported. The Association will analyse the report to inform future recruitment.

18 Data Protection/Retention

18.1 For Data Protection purposes and retention periods, application forms and recruitment documentation for unsuccessful applicants must be stored confidentially and retained for 12 months following interview. After which time they will be securely destroyed. Any undertaken PVG membership records/Disclosure Scotland checks must be stored in accordance with our Data Protection policy, retention schedule and staff privacy notice.

18.2 The successful candidate's recruitment documentation and all associated paperwork will be detailed in a personnel file and retained in line with the Association's retention schedule.

18.3 Cernach Housing Association will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under Data Protection policy and retention schedule. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided within our staff privacy statement.

19. Appointment, Induction & Probation

19.1 New employees appointed to a role within the Association will receive a structured induction programme, essential training, regular support and be subject to a probationary period. During the probationary period, the employee will be supported in adjusting to their new role and understanding the organisations expectations. This will include,

- An induction programme
- Regular review meetings with their line manager
- Clear objectives to be achieved
- Relevant training

20. Review

20.1 This policy will be reviewed every four years or earlier in line with legal, regulatory or best practice requirements. The next review will take place in or before December 2030.

Cernach Housing Association
Equality Impact Assessment

Name of the **policy / proposal** to be assessed	Recruitment and Selection	Is this a **new policy / proposal or a revision**?	Revision
Person(s) responsible for the assessment	L Crawford		
1. Briefly describe the **aims, objectives and purpose** of the policy / proposal	This policy provides a framework for fair, transparent, inclusive, and legally compliant recruitment, selection, and onboarding practices. Recruitment decisions will be based on merit, objective assessment and role related criteria as set out in the job description and person specification.		
2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy / proposal? *(e.g. applicants, tenants, staff, contractors)*	Staff team and prospective candidates.		
3. What **outcomes** are **wanted** from this policy / proposal? *(e.g. the benefits to customers)*	This policy commits the association to a robust recruitment and selection process to ensure the same process is followed, and candidates receive a fair and professional experience .		

4. Which **protected characteristics** could be **affected** by the proposal? (*tick all that apply*)

☒ Age ☒ Disability ☒ Marriage & Civil Partnership ☒ Pregnancy/Maternity ☒ Race

☒ Religion or Belief ☒ Gender ☒ Gender Reassignment ☒ Sexual Orientation

5. If the policy / proposal is not relevant to any of the **protected characteristics** listed in part 4, state why and end the process here.

6. Describe the **likely positive or negative impact(s)** the policy / proposal could have on the groups identified in part 4	**Positive impact(s)**	**Negative impact(s)**
	We offer an interview guarantee scheme, automatically entitling candidates to an interview if they identify as having a disability.	It may be that an applicant is subject to unconscious bias by those on the interview panel. Unconscious basis is the automatic, unintentional stereotyping or preference that people hold toward certain groups, people, or traits outside of their conscious awareness.

7. What **actions** are **required** to address the impacts arising from this assessment? *(This might include: collecting additional data, putting monitoring in place, specific actions to mitigate negative impacts).*	Unconscious bias is difficult to completely mitigate against. As an organisation our EDI policy clearly sets our commitment to equality and inclusion. Further actions we are taking to mitigate against negative impacts in relation to the recruitment and selection policy are: 1. Ensuring staff undertake regular equality, diversity and inclusion training. 2. Requiring at least two members of staff look at applications and have at least a two-person interview panel, with an additional member of the Management Committee for senior positions, as set out in this policy. 3. Advertising vacancies on various platforms to reach a wide range of people. 4. Blind sifting applications, ensuring personal idenitifers are removed before the applications are reviewed. 5. Following best practice guidance from EVH. 6. Clear recording and evidence of employment process. 7. Promoting an inclusive environment.

Signed: *L Crawford* Job title: Corporate Services Officer

Date the Equality Impact Assessment was completed: November 2026