



Bridgewater Housing Association Policy

Policy name	Recruitment and Selection Policy
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Next review	October 2026
Equalities impact assessment required	No
Links to other documents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EVH Terms and Conditions 2. Flexible Working Policy 3. Equality and Diversity Policy
Consultation	This policy was issued to all staff for comment.
Appendices	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bridgewater Housing Association (BHA) recognises its staff are fundamental to fulfilling the strategic aims and supporting the core values of its business. The Association seeks to recruit the best candidates with the necessary skills and attributes to fulfil the roles. We conduct business underpinned by Equal Opportunities legislation and strive to maintain a diverse staff team. The Association's policy on Equalities will apply to all matters of recruitment and selection.
- 1.2 We encourage excellence at all levels in our organisation and are not influenced by age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins and citizenship), religion/ belief, sex, and sexual orientation nor any other factor irrelevant to achieving successfully and performing our jobs.
- 1.3 This Policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and the Association can amend the policy at any time. Also, it is important to note that while this policy sets out the principles of conducting recruitment and selection, the Association does have the right to depart from the policy in some circumstances. This would only be if there were good business reasons, and in particular where this is appropriate to comply with legal obligations to other staff (in the case of redundancy, re-organisation, ill health, flexible working requests, and other similar scenarios).

2. SHR STANDARDS OF GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 2.1 This policy is intended to provide additional assurance to the Board of BHA that it is complying with:
 - STANDARD 5 The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity
 - STANDARD 6: The Governing body and senior officers have the necessary skills and knowledge they need to be effective.

3. PURPOSE

- 3.1 BHA encourages good practice and equal opportunities in line with legislative requirements to which all staff are required to adhere. During the recruitment and selection process, the aims of BHA are:
 - To attract candidates with the appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience for consideration for employment with BHA.
 - Ensure that access to employment opportunities is based on fair, objective and consistent criteria in line with BHA's Equality and Diversity policy
 - To ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are clear and adhered to by all staff and Board members involved.
 - To develop a suitably qualified workforce committed to the aims, values, and service delivery requirements of BHA.

4. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 4.1 In recruiting for newly created or vacant posts the Association will ensure that it complies with legislative requirements and demonstrates best practice as an employer with employment rights and equalities.
- 4.2 The Association will set out in the Job Pack, the job description and the person specification which will highlight the skills, attitude, and behaviours required in the role.
- 4.3 The staff involved in the recruitment process will have sufficient skills and knowledge and understanding of what is required of them as they recruit.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.1 Equal Opportunities are aimed at removing barriers to access and opportunity, with positive results for individuals and BHA. In the context of recruitment and selection, equal opportunities refer to equality in the attraction and selection of candidates, promotion or training in line with terms and conditions of employment. In seeking suitable candidates for new or vacant posts, BHA will not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race (including colour, nationality ethnic or national origins and citizenship), religion/belief, sex and sexual orientation nor any other factor irrelevant to achieving successfully and performing our jobs.
- 5.2 BHA's recruitment decisions will be based completely on the merits and abilities of candidates in line with those set out in the job description and person specification and no other criteria will be used. In order to achieve this, equality and diversity practices will be integrated into every stage of the recruitment and selection process.
- 5.3 A fair recruitment process will remove barriers where possible to the employment of individuals from different backgrounds. This will enable BHA to recruit from the widest pool of talent, thus raising the standard of candidates and therefore increasing the opportunity of a more diverse workforce which reflects the community it is serving. A more diverse workforce should improve BHA's service delivery, as it will include staff with varied knowledge and experience about meeting the needs and aspirations of service users and potential service users.
- 5.4 To highlight BHA's commitment to promoting equality and diversity from the beginning of the employment relationship, all vacancies will be aimed at as wide a group as possible and any advertisement for a vacancy within BHA will state that an equality and diversity policy is in place. In addition, the advert will also display any signs of equality bodies that BHA is affiliated with. The information contained in the advert and all vacancy literature will be clear and accurate to attract the most appropriate candidates from all groups across society, to allow them to decide their own suitability for the vacancy and whether they wish to apply. For those that wish to apply, BHA will ensure that all applications have clear instructions for completion

and application forms are free from personal questions that are not relevant to the vacancy or may lead to discrimination.

- 5.5 BHA will ensure that all staff involved at any stage in the recruitment and selection process receive equality and diversity awareness training. This will ensure that those involved in the recruitment process will not discriminate either knowingly or unknowingly by asking any questions which may lead to discrimination.

6. EXIT INTERVIEWS

- 6.1 Employees who have resigned from their post will be invited to attend an exit Interview prior to their termination date.
- 6.2 The Association's CEO will conduct exit interviews personally with any permanent member of staff who has tendered his/her resignation. In the CEO's absence, the exit interview will be carried out by another member of the Leadership Team, but not normally the Section Head of the relevant department.
- 6.3 The purpose of the exit interview is to allow BHA to gain further information about the employee's reason for leaving. Furthermore, it provides additional information in relation to,
- The employee's perception of the organisation in relation to its employment practices.
 - Management style and treatment perceived by employees as being unsatisfactory or unfair.
 - Identifying reasons for turnover and improvements the organisation can make in the future.
 - Whether there are any learning points or improvements the organisation can make on the working environment and culture.

7. JOB ANALYSIS AND ADVERTISING

- 7.1 Before recruiting for a vacant post, the Association will conduct a job analysis, often carried out by the CEO, in liaison with the Leadership Team. This involves assessing whether or not the post has to be filled and how it could be filled, what would be the adverse effects of not filling it, or if the work could be distributed amongst existing staff. For the Chief Executive's post, the recruitment process will be undertaken by the Board.
- 7.2 If it is decided that the post should be filled, a suitable job description, person specification, and application form/process will be agreed by the Departmental Head in liaison with the Head of Corporate Services and/or the CEO and an advertisement will be placed into appropriate advertising media or an external recruitment agency will be engaged to assist.
- 7.3 When recruiting for or considering new posts, this will be carried out following approval from the Finance & Corporate Services Sub or the Board. Appropriate budgets should be in place.

8. THE RECRUITMENT PANEL

- 8.1 It is recommended that that at least two individuals make up the recruitment panel where possible. Those individuals identified as suitable for the recruitment panel will depend on the post being filled. Below is an example:

- Staff only for posts which currently exist and are not of a senior nature.
- Staff and Board representatives for senior posts within BHA.

8.2 BHA recognises that the Board will require support when recruiting for the Chief Executive Officer. In this circumstance, they will seek support from an independent recruitment advisor/organisation prior to commencing the recruitment and selection process. The Board will decide who will be involved in the process alongside the Chair.

8.3 Any individual serving on a recruitment and selection panel will have undergone relevant recruitment and selection training along with equality and diversity awareness training.

9. ATTRACTING CANDIDATES

9.1 BHA understands the importance of attracting suitable candidates through the most appropriate and cost-effective means. The recruitment panel should discuss the best internal and external advertising methods in line with the agreed advertising budget. The knowledge and skills required for the job should ensure suitable candidates are attracted to apply for the job and the advert should outline the main details of the post:

- Job title
- Salary/ Grade
- Hours per week
- Location (indicate if hybrid working forms part of the role)
- Nature of the contract – permanent, fixed term
- Main duties
- Closing date and proposed interview date(s)
- Information on how to apply and any other relevant information.

10. PERMANENT RECRUITMENT

10.1 If it is deemed necessary to recruit another staff member or fill a vacant post permanently, a new or updated job description and person specification will be compiled; the position will be advertised using suitable outlets determined by the Section Head and Head of Corporate Services. In the interests of promoting staff retention, succession planning and reducing costs for posts of Grade 7 and below It will be at the Section Head's discretion as to whether the post can be advertised internally only in the first instance; any internal recruitment must ensure that the successful candidate meets the minimum requirements for the role. Posts of Grade 8 and above will be advertised internally and externally. External posts will also be advertised on our website.

10.2 An exception to this will be in cases of restructuring or redundancy where it may be necessary to appoint candidates into posts without advertising the vacancy.

11. INTERNAL RECRUITMENT

11.1 Where a vacancy is being opened up for competitive interview all existing staff will be notified of permanent and long-term temporary vacancies, especially if on sick leave, maternity leave, or holidays and will be eligible to apply for any post.

- 11.2 Short-term appointments of up to a year e.g. maternity leave cover, may be advertised internally and filled by internal transfers, where appropriate to do so, or by candidates engaged from suitable employment agencies or via services provided from other appropriate external sources. This can allow staff development and upskilling. Temporary posts over a year should normally be advertised internally and externally simultaneously and no extension beyond a further year would be considered unless approval is granted by Finance & Corporate Services Sub-Committee to ensure that the decision is made within the strategic direction of the Board.
- 11.3 For very short-term posts of a few weeks, internal advertising will not normally take place, but rather suitable employment agencies/services providers will be approached to provide a candidate, or secondment will be considered.

12. TEMPORARY RECRUITMENT

- 12.1 Short-term appointments of less than a year e.g. maternity leave cover, may be advertised internally and filled by internal transfers, where appropriate to do so, or by candidates engaged from suitable employment agencies.
- 12.2 Temporary posts in excess of a year should be advertised internally and externally simultaneously. For very short-term posts of a few weeks internal advertising will not normally take place but rather suitable employment agencies will be approached to provide a candidate.

13. RECRUITMENT INFORMATION TO CANDIDATES

- 13.1 All candidates will receive a job pack that will include a job description, a person specification, information on the association together with an application form and equal opportunities monitoring form.

14. SHORT LISTING

- 14.1 A shortlisting panel will carry out the shortlisting assessment process. For each vacancy or a new post, membership of the shortlisting panel will be as follows:

Post	Membership of Shortlisting Panel
Grade 1 PA1 – PA2 Trainee to Grade 7 PA22 – PA25 Professional Officer	2 Staff: - Section Head and either team Manager, other staff member Grade 7 or above or other Section Head
Grade 8 PA28 – PA31 Senior Professional Officer	2 Departmental Heads, and/or CEO
Grade 9 Senior Management Grade (Heads of Department)	2 Departmental Heads, usually including CEO and/or a Board Member

Chief Executive	1 Office Bearer and 1 other Board Member & recruitment advisor
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- 14.2 At least one panel member must possess skills or experience most closely related to the post for which candidates are to be shortlisted and interviewed. Panel members who shortlist where possible will also participate as interviewers to ensure consistency in recruitment.
- 14.3 Essential criteria will be applied in the first instance to shortlist candidates. Candidates who do not match all the essential criteria will not normally be shortlisted for an interview. Candidates who do not possess all the desirable criteria may still be shortlisted to interview. However, desirable criteria will be applied, secondly, in a large response, to reduce fairly the number of candidates called for interview.
- 14.4 If a panel member recognises a candidate's details, who is known to the panel member, they should declare this interest and it will be either the Section Head or CEO's decision whether they should be replaced.
- 14.5 Candidates invited to interview, and unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the result of their applications. Unsuccessful candidates may be offered the opportunity for feedback on their applications.

15. MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS

- 15.1 The Association is committed to having up to two Modern Apprentices employed at any one time. Each Modern Apprentice will have a job description, but not necessarily a person specification as the post is about building skills and capacity. Candidates for modern apprenticeships will also be required to submit application documents, usually a CV, which will be subjected to fair shortlisting procedures. Successful shortlisted individuals will be invited to attend an interview and the most suitable individuals will be selected. The interview panel will be made up as per Grade 1 above.

16. REFERENCES

- 16.1 References will be sought after a conditional offer of employment has been accepted. Reference requests will be made to the most current or recent employer or academic/voluntary or good character referee contact, who must not be related to the candidate. If a referee happens to be a panel member, then the candidate will be asked to provide an alternative referee.
- 16.2 Until a conditional offer of employment has been accepted, candidates will not be asked questions about their health, absence record etc (save in the limited circumstances permitted by law, such as asking about whether any adjustments are required to allow the candidate to fully participate in the interview process). After a conditional offer of employment has been accepted the Association reserves the right to make health/medical inquiries to assess whether any adjustments or other measures are needed to accommodate a person who has a disability or other health condition or for any other appropriate purpose.

17. INTERVIEW

- 17.1 Before interview for Grade 8's and above, shortlisted candidates may be offered a tour of the building and a chance to meet their potential team and line manager.
- 17.2 The interview panel should normally reflect the same membership as the shortlisting panel, but it is accepted this is not possible in all cases.
- 17.3 Only individuals who have received interviewing skills training or coaching or have sufficient experience of the same will be able to participate in the interviewing panel unless they are attending to gain experience and shadow other members of the panel.
- 17.4 All shortlisted candidates should be offered an interview where the same questions, based on the job description and person specification, will be asked in the same order to all candidates. This may also include a suitable test and presentation topic where appropriate. Interviews will be typically of 30-60 minutes' duration depending on the nature of the post. The questions will be made available to the candidate, 10 minutes before the interview. There may also be additional questions focussing on specifics associated with the application or experience where clarity is sought.
- 17.5 Any requested, appropriate information which has been provided by the Association to an interviewee will be made available to all other candidates invited to interview.
- 17.6 Interviews questions will cover both the requirements of the person specification and job description and also, the person's reasons for applying for the post and their general approach to their work.
- 17.7 A second interview is acceptable where two candidates cannot be split at the first interview. The second interview is likely to either be an informal chat to find out more about the person and their skills and experience or a demonstration in the form of a presentation of their skills and experience.
- 17.8 The recruitment panel will decide which panel member will Chair the interviews on the day. The Chair of the recruitment panel will be responsible for:
- Introducing the panel members to candidates.
 - Explaining the format of the day, ensuring timings are adhered to.
 - Informing candidates about when they should expect to be contacted about the outcome of their interview.
 - Completing an overall assessment form combining all panel member scores for each candidate interviewed.
 - Ensuring panel members state and document justifiable reasons for the rejection of each unsuccessful candidate.
 - All interview paperwork being accurately completed.

18. ASSESSMENT

- 18.1 Panel members must complete an appropriate evidence-based interview assessment form for each candidate.
- 18.2 Where candidates are judged to be equal, they may be called back for a second interview. Panel members must state and document justifiable reasons for the rejection of each unsuccessful interviewee.
- 18.3 As part of the recruitment and selection process, BHA may ask candidates to carry out a test/skills assessment. This is not applicable for every role, but the recruitment panel will decide what is necessary to determine suitability for the role. This may take the form of a practical exercise, management test or presentation to the recruitment panel. Where this is required, candidates will be informed in advance of their interview to allow suitable time to prepare as necessary.

19. JOB OFFER

- 19.1 Once the interview panel has made its decision, a conditional offer will be issued to the successful interviewee subject to:
- the receipt of satisfactory references,
 - satisfactory medical inquiries if appropriate, qualification certificates (where required);
 - proof of eligibility to work in the UK;
 - a satisfactory PVG membership/Disclosure Scotland check where appropriate.
- 19.2 Appointments will normally be made at the lowest point of the relevant salary scale. However, if appropriate, an appointment may be made at an alternative suitable starting salary, paying due consideration to a candidate's skills, experience, and present and future circumstances. This would be subject to the agreement of the Chief Executive and consider appropriate budgets. The initial offer can be verbal and followed up in writing. A probationary period may be considered in accordance with EVH terms and conditions. The terms of a written contract of employment will be confirmed and issued subsequently once the above conditions have been satisfied.
- 19.3 If the job offer is declined, the second highest scoring suitable candidate may be offered the post subsequently if agreed by the interview panel. This may involve bringing them in for a second interview or chat before making the decision. If there is not a suitable reserve candidate, the recruitment process should be revised and a rerun of the whole recruitment process should be considered.
- 19.4 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 and within a few days of the interview has taken place and to offer feedback.

20. FEEDBACK

- 20.1 All interviewees will be advised typically of the outcome of their interviews by telephone/email or letter and constructive feedback on their performance can also be made available to them, if they desire via the telephone.

21. SELECTION CHECKS

21.1 References

BHA will carry out reference checks for the successful candidate only once the verbal offer has been made and the candidate has informed BHA that it is suitable to do so. Two references will be required, one from the candidate's current employer and another from a previous employer. These will be requested in writing along with a copy of the job description. This will provide the referees with the knowledge and skills required for the post to allow them to give an informed opinion about the preferred candidate. All references will be checked on return to ensure employment dates match those stated on the application form of the preferred candidate and there is no information which would make the reference unsatisfactory.

21.2 Right to Work in the UK

BHA has a responsibility to prevent illegal working therefore we will carry out a right to work check before confirming employment for the successful candidate. This will ensure the candidate is not disqualified from carrying out the work in question by reason of their immigration status. The successful candidate will be informed what is required to satisfy this check.

21.3 Disclosure Scotland Criminal Records Checks

The successful candidate will be asked to complete a criminal convictions declaration form. Depending on the nature of the role, they may also be asked to undergo a PVG/ Disclosure Check. If following these checks, information arises which the candidate has not disclosed or raises concern with BHA, we will discuss this with the candidate prior to a decision being made about whether the selection check has been satisfied.

22. INTERVIEW EXPENSES

- 22.1 Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed to candidates for non-local journeys. Any reasonable interview travel expenses paid to candidates for new or vacant posts will be in accordance with BHA's expenses and finance policies and procedures. BHA may consider carrying out an interview electronically where it is deemed the cost of expenses may be excessive for the role advertised.

23. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING

- 23.1 As part of BHA's recruitment process, equal opportunities monitoring will be undertaken from any completed equal opportunities forms and reported. BHA will analyse the report to inform future recruitment.

24. DATA PROTECTION/ RETENTION

- 24.1 Application forms and recruitment documentation for unsuccessful candidates must be stored confidentially for a maximum of 1 year's duration in line with BHA's Data Retention Schedule. Any undertaken PVG membership records/Disclosure Scotland checks must be stored in accordance with the Storage and Safe Handling of Disclosure Checks Retention Policy.
- 24.2 Special consideration will be given to storing the results of any criminal record check or health questionnaire/medical report. BHA will make a record of all checks and whether the result was or was not satisfactory. The original will then be promptly destroyed. The record of the results will then then be stored in accordance with our Data Retention Procedures. There may be exceptional circumstances where this information should be kept if it is clearly related to the ongoing employment relationship.
- 24.3 The successful candidate's recruitment documentation will be incorporated into a personnel file and retained.
- 24.4 Please refer to the Association's Privacy Policy and Employee Privacy Notice.

25. INDUCTION

- 25.1 The Head of Corporate Services and Departmental Head will welcome a new post holder by providing initial induction training in the organisation, which will be organised in advance. This will help to settle the new staff member, convey our aims, objectives, policies, and procedures thereby encouraging the individual to be comfortable, stay and make a valuable contribution to our work.

26. FAILURE TO RECRUIT

- 26.1 Should the full recruitment and selection procedure fail to recruit a suitable candidate, reasons for this should be identified and considered, appropriate alterations made, and recruitment should be rerun where appropriate to do so. Applicants who made an application for the original advertisement will not be considered for any re-advertisement.

27. COMPLAINTS

- 27.1 If a complaint is received about any stage of the recruitment and selection process it should be resolved promptly in the first instance and verbally where appropriate to do so. If the complainant wishes to further pursue the matter, they should be advised to put the complaint in writing and address it to the Chief Executive who will investigate the matter and further liaise with the complainant.

28. CONSULTATION

28.1 This policy was circulated to all staff for comment.

29. POLICY AVAILABILITY

29.1 This document can also be provided in large print, braille, audio, or other non-written format and in a variety of languages, on request.

30. MONITORING AND REVIEW

30.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, unless amendment is prompted by a change in legislation, operational requirements, or staff feedback.