

# Hybrid Working Framework

April 2022



**LANGSTANE**

HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

YOUR HOME MATTERS

## Our Mission, Values and Commitment

**Our Mission** is to provide homes and services that make a positive difference to people's lives.

**Our Values** include that we: **move with the times; rely on teamwork; and value people.**

- The Association promotes hybrid working for all employees and recognises the benefits of changing your working environment to enhance your productivity and the needs of your day.
- We take account of our tenant and internal customer needs, our employees and the tasks to be done when deciding where and when to work.
- This framework is designed to support our teams with decision making on hours, place and our approach to work and ensure you are operating safely at work.

# Hybrid Working Guide

## What is Hybrid Working?

Hybrid working combines time spent working in your contracted place of work along with working from home, another Association location or a third party space. It is a way of working in which all colleagues recognise that we can approach the day at work in a place and at agreed times in the best way to ensure the best possible customer service to our tenants and to our internal customers - with flexibility to maximise our performance and output whilst also balancing work and life demands.

It also involves utilising technology to adapt working practices to work smarter, increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of employees in their roles – we expect to broaden the scope of options once our IT Roadmap is delivered. Efficient and consistent use of our systems including Outlook calendars and out of office messages is crucial to ensure colleagues know your availability on any given day.

There are benefits and considerations for both employees and managers in adopting hybrid working (**see Overview page**).

This framework does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment and may be varied as appropriate. It will be reviewed regularly and updated to meet tenant and Association requirements and to ensure the health and wellbeing of our employees.

## Importance of Conversations

Enabling hybrid working requires trust, responsibility and communication between each employee within a team and the line manager - collaborating and communicating to ensure our tenants and other customer needs are met and to achieve common goals.

Conversations are key! It is important that together with your line manager you openly discuss the hybrid working opportunities and mutually agree on how to optimise service delivery through the working practices that will benefit you and the wider team.

With your line manager you collaborate to develop a shared responsibility in agreeing hybrid working practices, how they can successfully be adopted, and decide outcome based measures of performance.

Ongoing communication and collaboration between you is encouraged to regularly review the established hybrid working arrangements to ensure they continue to operate effectively and adapt them where necessary.

Whilst there is no official appeal process, if a preferred hybrid pattern cannot be accommodated and a compromise cannot be found from both you and your line manager, please speak to the People and Culture Manager.

# Hybrid Working Considerations

## Location

- When a Hybrid Working plan is agreed, your contractual place of work will remain unchanged.
- The Association may ask you to work remotely on a temporary basis as a result of full or part office closures due to Government guidance or in the best interests of maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of employees and tenants or other visitors to our offices. We will use our Toucan Text service to confirm any need for this to your personal contact number.

## Health, Safety and Facilities

- It's key to keep your colleagues and line manager informed of your whereabouts from a health and safety (H&S) perspective. We have a duty of care to you – we care where you are and how you are.
- Take in to account our Health and Safety Policy details and be aware of your H&S duties. As an employee you are jointly responsible for your own H&S at all times, and it is also your responsibility to ensure your actions do not affect the H&S of others around you.

## Our ways of working

- It's your responsibility to make sure you can connect when working remotely, i.e. there are no Wi-Fi challenges in the home and that your workstation set-up means you can work as effectively and productively as you would in the office.
- Making sure you have clearly set out commitments and expectations, for example, ensuring Outlook calendar visibility. This transparency leads to greater collaboration and autonomy.
- Keeping in touch is also important for our emotional wellbeing – conversations are key!

## Security

- Your responsibilities for data security are set out in our Privacy Policy and associated procedures.
- Do not use open public Wi-Fi (internet) in places like cafes, trains or any other public place as this is not deemed as secure.
- Keep your devices secure at all times by never leaving these unlocked at any location or unattended in a public place.
- Continue to use your Solo Protect device when you are lone working in tenant homes, empty properties, or in our schemes.
- Make use of backgrounds on video calls to maintain your home privacy.

## “Moments that matter”

- You've told us that there are times you would wish to be face to face with colleagues or your line manager.
- There will be times that you will be needed in the office to allow teamwork and collaboration. This might be for team meetings, training or key announcements as well as for induction purposes. Such dates and times will be agreed in advance.
- When there is an operational need for you to be in the office, e.g. to support peaks in demand or to help cover for absence, your line manager will wherever possible give a minimum of 24 hours notice.

## Equipment

- Your wellbeing is important to us no matter where you are working. In your primary contractual location you will be provided with full IT hardware configurations. When working elsewhere mobile working devices such as, laptops, tablets and mobile phones will be provided to facilitate hybrid working.
- Workstation self-assessments can be reviewed to ensure the correct set up and to be included in your discussions when considering what works for all. The Health and Safety Executive have a helpful checklist available at [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.pdf).

# Hybrid Working Overview

## Location

**Working from a remote location** – It might be possible to do some or all of the work from home / remotely

**Working from another location** – There could be synergies in working from another location that could be mutually beneficial (e.g. in our communities or a Partner location)

## Working Pattern

**Part Time** – Working less than full time

**Agree staggered hours** – different start, finish and break times to other employees

**Agree core hours** – and the rest is flexible

**Compressed hours** – working full time hours but over fewer days

## Working Approach

**Change how things are done** – finding smarter and more efficient ways of working to increase pace and productivity / deliver enhanced customer service

**Collaborating and communicating to achieve common goals** – monitored by output and quality. The more autonomy employees have over how, when and where things are done, the greater their passion and output

### Working Practices

### Benefits

### Considerations

- Sense of autonomy
- Can positively impact productivity
- Wellbeing and work/life balance improved
- Time saving on commuting
- Wider collaboration with Partners

- Team and Operational processes
- Health and Safety
- Data security
- Potential isolation and loneliness

- Increased control over work and personal life
- Flexibility leads to increased job satisfaction
- Improved retention

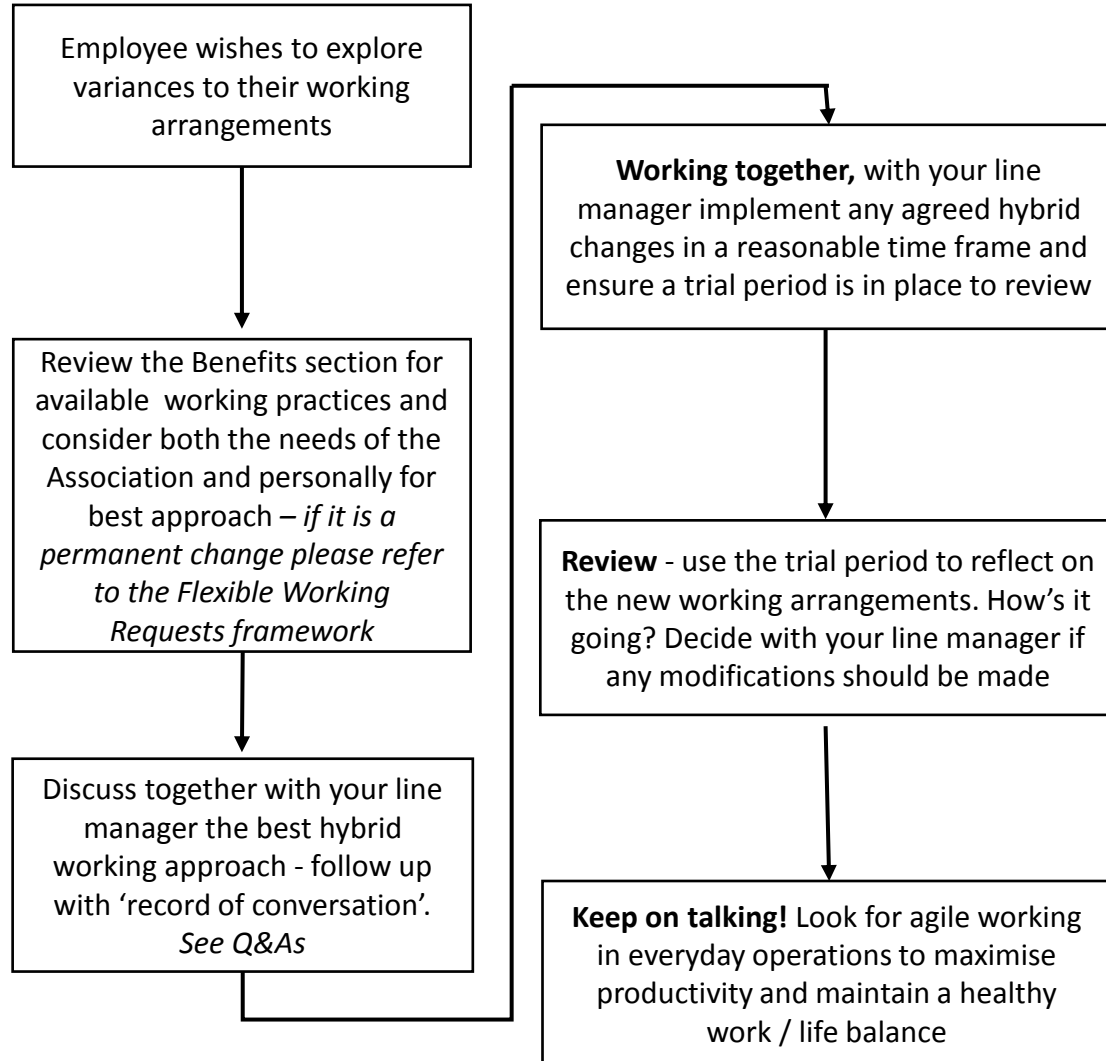
- Requires careful management to ensure right hybrid balance
- If it's a permanent change to hours, use Flexible Working request as would be contractual - bear in mind the pattern may impact holiday entitlement

- Wellbeing and work/life balance improved
- Can improve productivity
- Simplicity, efficiency and greater collaboration

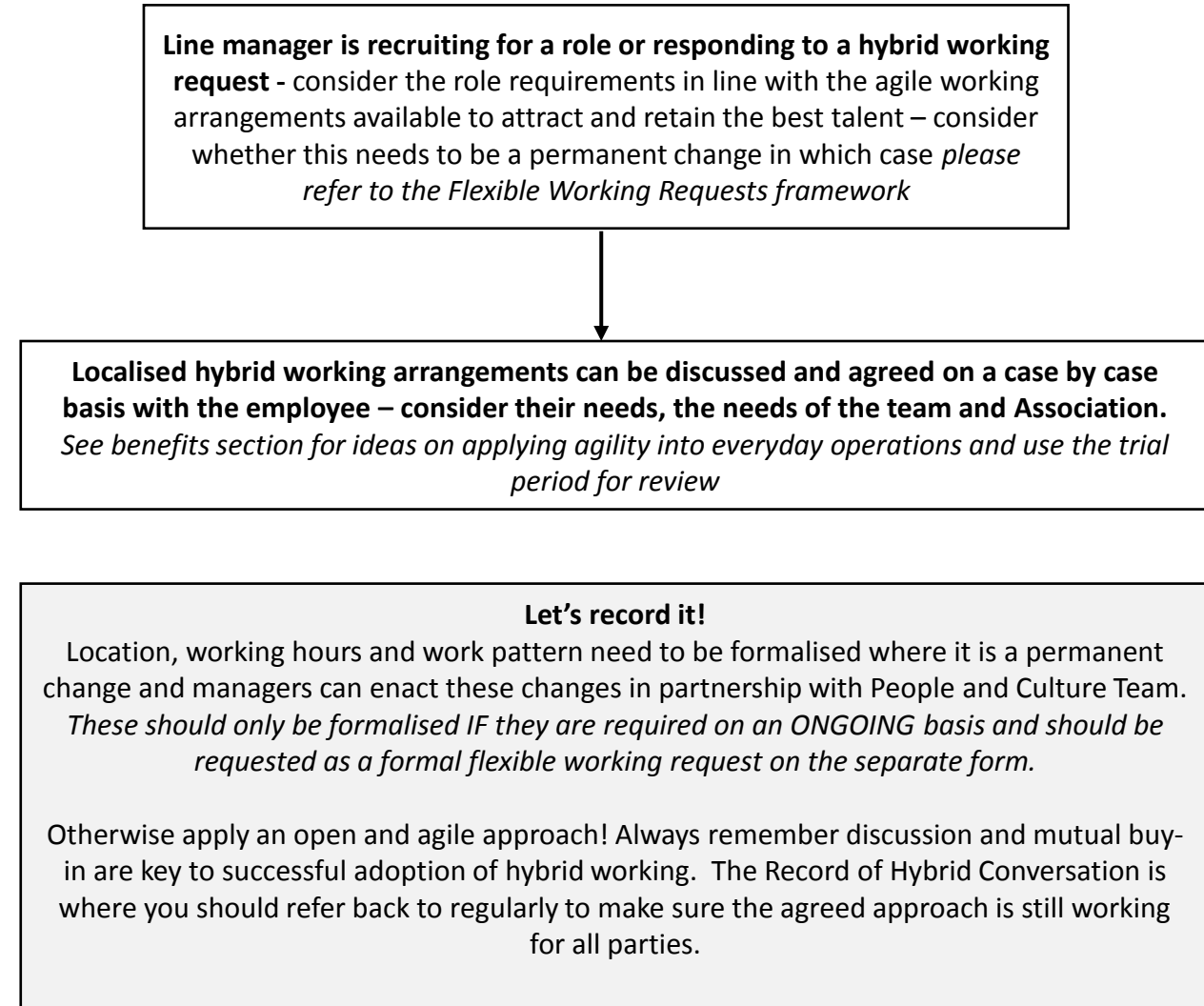
- Requires innovative mindset for both you and your manager to be open to suggestions

# Hybrid working – how it works

## EMPLOYEE CONSIDERS HYBRID WORKING ARRANGEMENTS



## LINE MANAGER REVIEWS ROLE FOR HYBRID WORKING



# Hybrid Working Q&A

## How do we plan and explore the hybrid working opportunities available?

This guide takes you through the hybrid working practices to consider. A mutual agreement based on a conversation is important – as is spending the time talking through the options. All angles need to be considered – firstly, what’s our tenant or internal customer needs in the team? How will this work within the team? What is in the art of the possible? Mutually explore and agree between you and your manager the best option and reach out with any queries to the People and Culture Manager.

## What is the purpose of the Hybrid Working Record of Conversation?

Applying flexibility into everyday work can be discussed and agreed mutually between you and your line manager. Use the ‘Record of Conversation Form’ to capture the commitments made by both parties during the discussion. Ongoing communication and regular review of the agreed approach are encouraged - to ensure clarity on what’s expected and success of the working arrangements. You can also use it for future follow up to review and adapt the working practice(s) where necessary.

## How much notice is needed for a Hybrid Working change?

It’s a good idea to start the quality conversation with your manager as soon as possible, and the more time dedicated to the discussion and exploring the different working practices, the better for everyone!

## How long should the trial period be set for?

The usual length of time for a trial period is three months, however it is important to discuss and mutually agree between you and your manager the length of time required to appropriately review the working arrangements and modify, as necessary.

## Is it possible to change back to the original working practice?

Continuous review and reflection on working practices is advised. Any adaptations or modifications should be discussed and considered together to get the best option. We appreciate that circumstances change and what’s right for now might not be right in the future for either you or the Association.

## Will there be any change to benefits if hybrid working is agreed?

No. However, requests for a permanent change to your Terms and Conditions of employment that are considered through our Flexible Working Request framework may have a knock on effect. Contractual benefits will align to any working pattern change, and this will be discussed at the time. For example, a change in the number of days worked in a week would impact benefits such as pay and holidays. Both would be calculated pro-rata to the revised working pattern.

## Will the Association pay for a portion of my utility bills?

Any costs incurred as a result of working from home on a temporary or hybrid basis or costs related to setting up your workstation at home are at your expense. This includes but is not limited to utility costs, home insurance costs, stationery and printing costs. You may however be able to claim tax relief for household expenses incurred as a result of working from home when you have been asked to do so, provided the expenses are solely work related.

The Government guide is available at [www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home](http://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home)

It is your responsibility to make arrangements to ensure your mortgage or tenancy agreement permit you to work from home on a temporary or hybrid basis and that your home is adequately insured for this purpose also.

## How do we ensure continued success of hybrid working?

Ongoing, open conversations are key here - we can achieve continuous improvement for our people and culture by communicating and collaborating to drive better working practices for all.

**Wherever, Whenever** and **However** you are working, think about both your physical and emotional wellbeing and keep talking!