Hundred Houses Society
Our Culture Book

The way we work round here …

Introduction from our Chief Executive - Matt Thomas

For us at Hundred Houses, **our culture is the way we work together** to achieve **our mission *to provide good quality homes in Greater Cambridge that people value*** and to deliver our aspirations and priorities in our Corporate Strategy.

We are proud to be a local, independent housing association that has been an important part of the communities we serve for over 90 years. We passionately believe in the importance of providing places that our customers can make their home.

Our Culture Book sets out for employees, and everyone who works with us, the culture we are seeking to develop. We worked together as an employee team to co-create this guide to our culture – we're proud of where we work, how we work and, *why* we work for Hundred Houses.

We don't always get it right, but the Culture Book sets out what we expect and the important role we all play.

Our Mission and Objectives

Corporate Strategy 2025-28

Improving Together

Our Mission:

To provide good quality homes and services in Greater Cambridge that people value.

Our Objectives

- To provide customers with good quality homes that are safe, well-maintained, energy & resource efficient and affordable.
- To provide customers with good quality services, opportunities to influence, and support which meets their needs.
- To provide employees with a good place to work and learn.
- To work with customers, employees and partners to continuously improve.

Our Role in Culture

Our customers, employees, Board and Committee members and partners all play a key role in helping us achieve our goals and ambition.

We all have an important role in influencing and shaping our culture and want everyone who works with us to play their part in working positively together.

Our behaviours guide how we make decisions, how we support our colleagues and how we deliver great customer service. If we are clear about what's expected of us and we are aligned to work to a set of behaviours, we achieve more. Achieving more helps us to reach our goals, individually and organisationally.

We believe partnerships make us stronger and enable us to achieve more. We aim to be a good partner, who people enjoy working with.

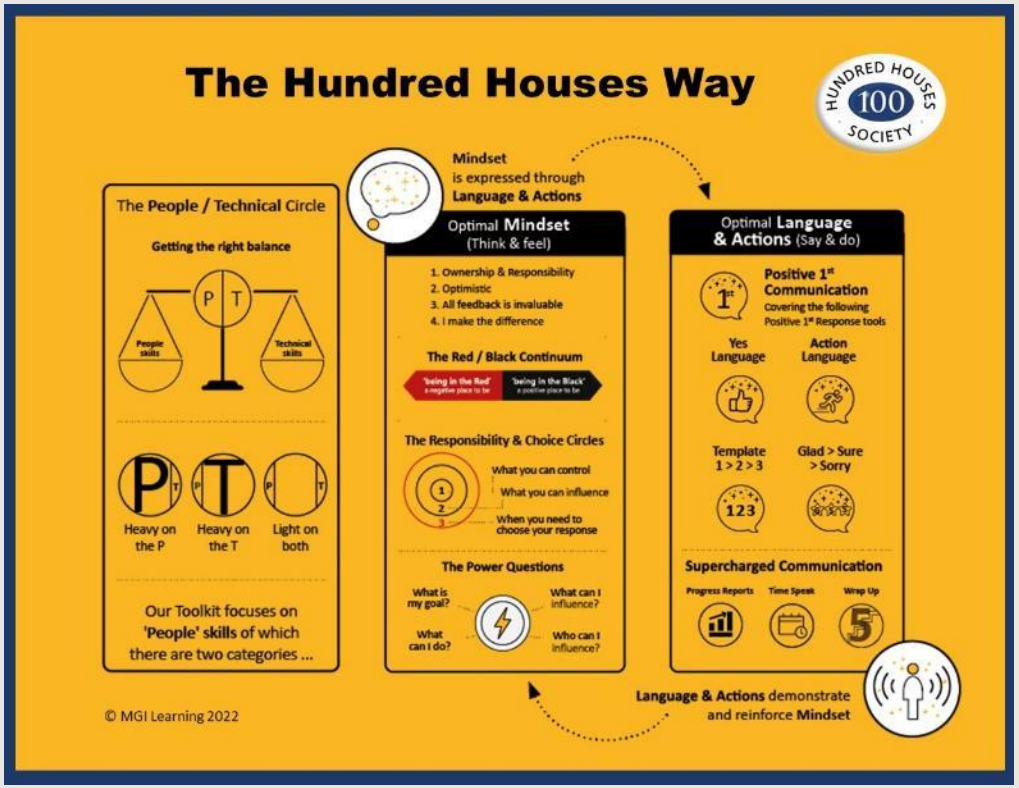
Our Values

Our Values guide how we work with customers, partners and each other.

We believe we are at our best when we:

- Listen carefully to understand
- Empower each other to build trust
- Explore choices to find the best
- Work positively together

The Hundred Houses Way



The Hundred Houses Way gives us a toolkit to provide good service to customers, partners and each other.

The Hundred Houses Way is based on the customer service principles of Mary Gober (www.mgilearning.com). You will receive regular training and learn to use the principles as the basis for consistent and excellent customer service.

You will hear colleagues refer to these phrases in their interactions with you:

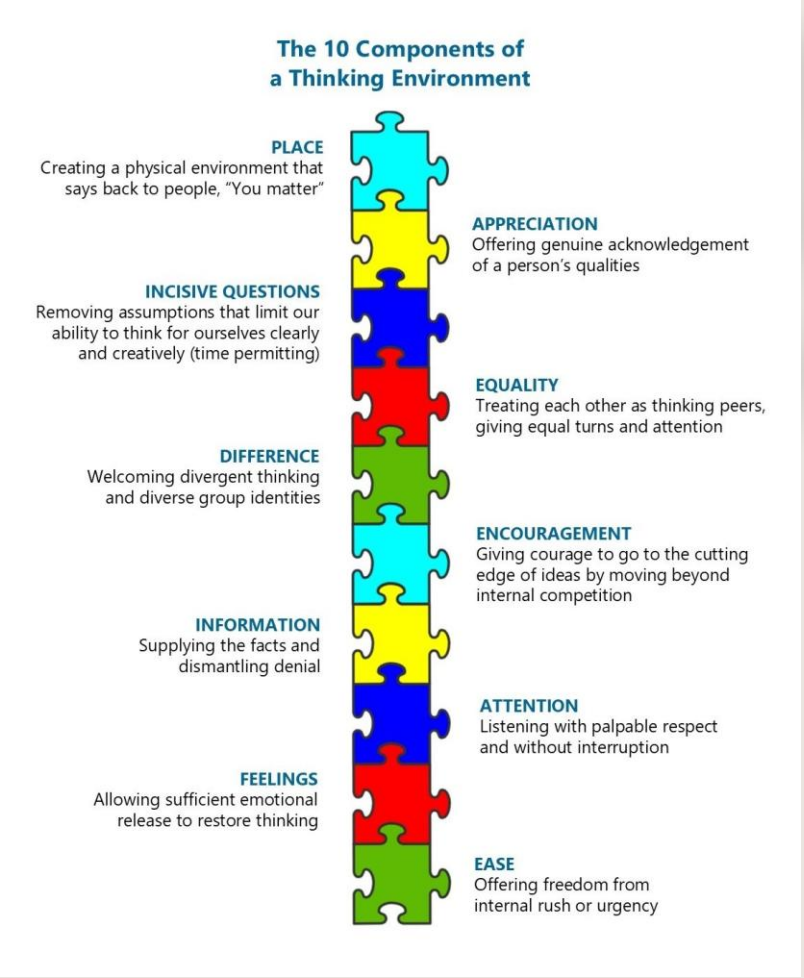
- Being ‘in the Red’ or ‘in the Black’
- Positive First
- Timespeak

We encourage a positive and Optimistic Mindset

We look for the best outcomes and work with our colleagues to encourage a positive and optimistic mindset, particularly when things are tough.

By working positively together we can resolve issues with a more curious and creative mindset – this means that our customers' issues are more likely to be resolved quickly and effectively which will improve customer satisfaction.

Time to Think principles and use of The Thinking Environment (www.timetothink.com), based on the work of Nancy Kline, support how we work together and are used in some meetings to help us get the best out of ourselves and each other.



Wellbeing and Welldoing

Our employees are what make us a special organisation. We believe we all play a part in creating a positive work environment, where our employees can flourish and make a difference.

We actively promote wellbeing and offer flexible working in a kind and caring environment.
We support each other and recognise our personal responsibility (welldoing) to get the right life-work balance.

We have regular training on mental health awareness, have developed a stress management toolkit, provide a 24/7 Employee Assistant Programme (through Health Assured), offer private healthcare, have trained mental health first aiders and have a Wellbeing Channel on Teams.

Diversity and Inclusion

We value diversity and use coaching and other methods to encourage innovative and diverse thinking in an inclusive environment.

We believe in positive relationships and respect each other's views and opinions.

Complementing our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, our commitment and approach is an important part of both our Customer and People Strategies.

Ownership and Responsibility

We take ownership and responsibility for our decisions. This means we talk about what we can do and work together to solve problems and find solutions to the challenges we face.

We balance the needs of customers, our regulator, funders and others to meet our responsibilities and achieve the best outcomes.

Our Performance

We strive to do our best for our customers and that means focusing on our performance.

We use performance information to make sure we are delivering to the standards and quality that customers and we expect.

We aim to deliver great value in all that we do and to find new and better ways to provide the service our customers deserve.

We discuss performance regularly with our Board and Committees, in team meetings and in 121s. We all play a part in achieving good results.

Continuous Improvement

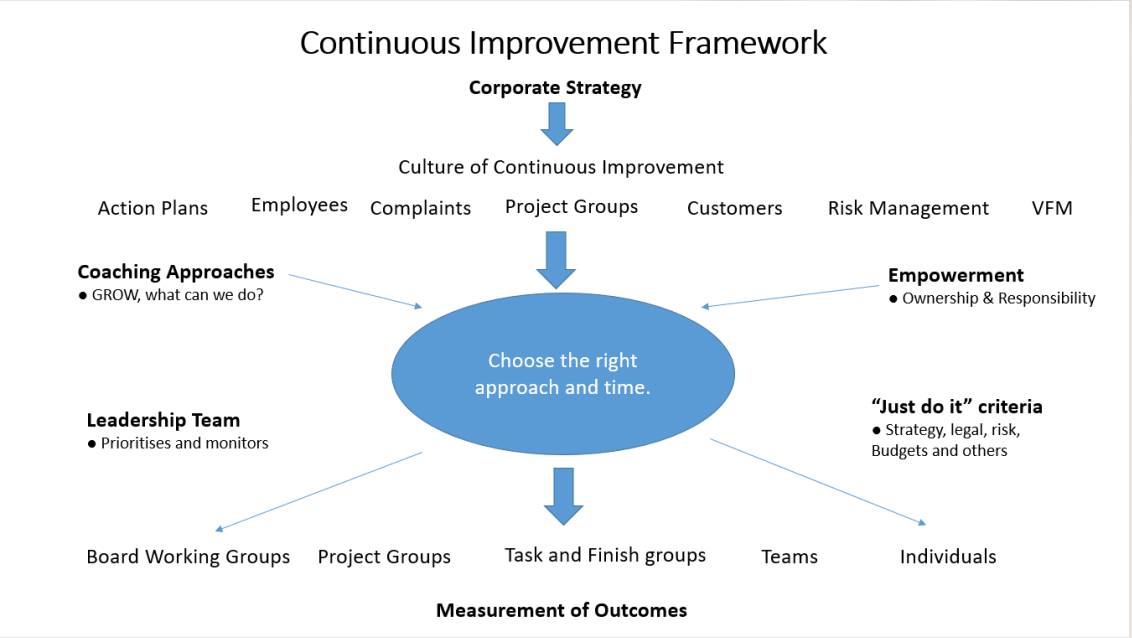
We seek to get the basics right and use continuous improvement to develop and improve our services and systems.

We follow best practice and explore new ideas, while making sure we are not reckless.
We celebrate our successes and learn from our mistakes, using feedback to learn, develop and improve.

We have developed a Continuous Improvement Framework, which includes the opportunity to “Just do it”, so long as the criteria are followed.

Just do it Criteria

- Aligns with Corporate and other relevant strategies
- Can be delivered within existing resources
- Has a positive or neutral impact on others
- Maintains legal and regulatory compliance
- Improves or maintains our risk exposure
- Clearly communicated to all those impacted



Our Culture in Action …

Culture Theme	Behavioural Examples
We Encourage a Positive and Optimistic Mindset	We are more likely to hear a colleague say - *'We can find a way to resolve this if we really listen to each other …' rather than ' I don't think we'll able to do that'.*
Wellbeing and Welldoing	Looking out for each other might mean we suggest a walk and fresh air at lunchtime, rather than trying to 'power on' through when both of us are feeling under pressure.
Diversity and Inclusion	We'll be seeking out other views and opinions *'I'd value your input on this, what's your view?'* more than dismissing an idea that is different to our way of thinking or how we've done it before.
Ownership and Responsibility	When we're not sure what we should do, or don't know something, we find out by asking our manager, a colleague or collaborate with another team, rather than shrugging and hoping someone else will sort it out.
Our Performance	We're keen to know how we are performing, individually, as a team and as an organisation. Are we on track to meet our goals and objectives and if not, what can we do about it?
Continuous Improvement	When we observe that a process doesn't work well, or is too complex, we look for ways to improve it and make suggestions rather than complain about it.

What our people say about working here

‘People have a voice here’

‘Helping customers with their problems and issues gives me a buzz - it’s what we are here for’

‘I love making a real difference to someone especially when it hasn’t been easy or smooth to sort out’

‘I like the variety in my role’

‘Interacting and working closely with knowledgeable, trusted and experienced colleagues is a great feeling’

‘People are really supportive of each other’

‘We care about each other’

‘HHS has a family feel’

‘Our people are dedicated and passionate’

‘Friendly and social’

‘We’re all about wellbeing and welldoing!’

‘When functioning well, we are a really good landlord!’

Employee Commitment

As an employee team we are committed to working together to improve our culture. During 2026 we will work on:

Whole of Hundred Houses

- Working positively together to improve teamwork & collaboration and build trust
- Communicating better with customers and each other through consistent use of the Hundred Houses Way
- Recognition and sharing success

Executive Team

- Inspiring and motivating the whole team as leaders
- Improving executive and organisational alignment
- Coaching more, critiquing less

Leadership Team

- Cultural leadership
- Learning from mistakes (mistake mantra: admit it – put it right – learn from it – do not repeat)
- System and process improvements

People Managers

- Promoting our values and a positive mindset
- Role clarity and ownership – who is doing what
- Improving and maintaining performance
- Enabling employee learning and development

Board and Committee Commitment

At Hundred Houses, our people make the difference.

We are proud of the dedication, professionalism, and care shown every day by colleagues across the organisation. Whether supporting our customers, colleagues, or communities, every role makes an essential contribution to who we are and what we achieve together. The commitment, compassion, and creativity of our teams bring our mission and values to life.

As the Board and Committee Members of Hundred Houses we have listened carefully to what you have told us through the Culture Book about what makes Hundred Houses a great place to work and a trusted landlord. We share your pride in our culture, and we commit to standing alongside you in continuing to build it. This Commitment is our response. It sets out how, as your Board and Committees, we will “walk the walk”: governing, deciding, and leading in ways that reflect and reinforce the values you have created.

Board and Committee Commitment

1. Clarity, Purpose, and Accountability

- We will be clear about why we are doing something and what we expect.
- We will base our decisions on evidence and insight, showing how they benefit our customers, colleagues, and communities.
- We will ensure that performance and culture are linked, recognising that a positive culture enables great outcomes.
- We will set clear parameters and boundaries so that expectations are transparent and consistent.

2. Inclusion, Wellbeing, and Positive Working Culture

- We will champion an inclusive environment in which every voice is heard, and people can flourish personally and collectively.
- We will actively support positive work–life balance, wellbeing, and “welldoing” for our people.
- We will ensure our culture enables safety, psychological security, and fairness.

Board and Committee Commitment

3. Customer and Community Focus, Assurance, and Sustainability

- We will consider how every decision and action impacts our customers, colleagues, and their satisfaction and wellbeing.
- We will ensure diverse customer perspectives are reflected in our assurance and decision-making.
- We will promote sustainability and responsible stewardship in all that we do.
- We will continue to seek ways to deliver value and impact — doing more for less where possible, without compromising quality or integrity.

Our Promise

- We commit to lead by example, demonstrating through our behaviour the culture we wish to see across Hundred Houses.
- We will celebrate success, learn from mistakes, and hold ourselves and each other accountable for sustaining a culture that is kind, inclusive, and high-performing.

“Culture lives in what we do, not what we say.”

Where to find us
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