

CAMPBELL  
TICKELL

Disruptive  
Innovators  
Network

# The Future of People Services - what's next?

# Introduction

Welcome to this collaborative piece of research between the Disruptive Innovators Network and Campbell Tickell to explore how leaders in people and HR services have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and what innovative approaches they are developing to help prepare their organisations for what comes next.



**Gera Patel**  
Partner, Campbell  
Tickell

Never before has the world of work changed as much or as quickly as it has in the past 12 months. For some businesses, the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing lockdown has almost entirely transformed the way they operate. Within that transformation, the 'people', organisational development and HR functions of organisations have become critically important in a way that they perhaps have never been before. The move to working remotely is forcing us to reimagine everything from workplace culture to pay and reward structures, from wellbeing and mental health to the employee value proposition and productivity.

In this report, thought leaders and experts in the HR and people sector offer their insights into what this new landscape means for organisations and the people who manage them.



**Ian Wright**  
CEO, Disruptive  
Innovators Network

## The key questions

How can organisations better manage employee wellbeing? How can we devise a fairer, more flexible reward system? Has working from home fundamentally changed the relationship between employer and worker? And what role will data play in the brave new world of 21st Century work?

This report lays out the context and attempts to answer these and other questions.

While the report is presented as a series of chapters, each subject area covered – from leadership to wellbeing to pay to diversity – has an impact on the others. In other words, when one lever is pulled at an organisational level, it has effects across the business.

That is why we believe it is more important than ever to make sure that an organisation's people function sits at the top table with its strategic leadership team. Businesses need to ensure that their organisational infrastructure is built around people, rather than have people fit into a pre-existing structure. We think a good question leaders should be asking themselves at the moment is, how can we ensure HR/People services have a seat in the executive in setting the organisations future strategic direction?

## Necessary change

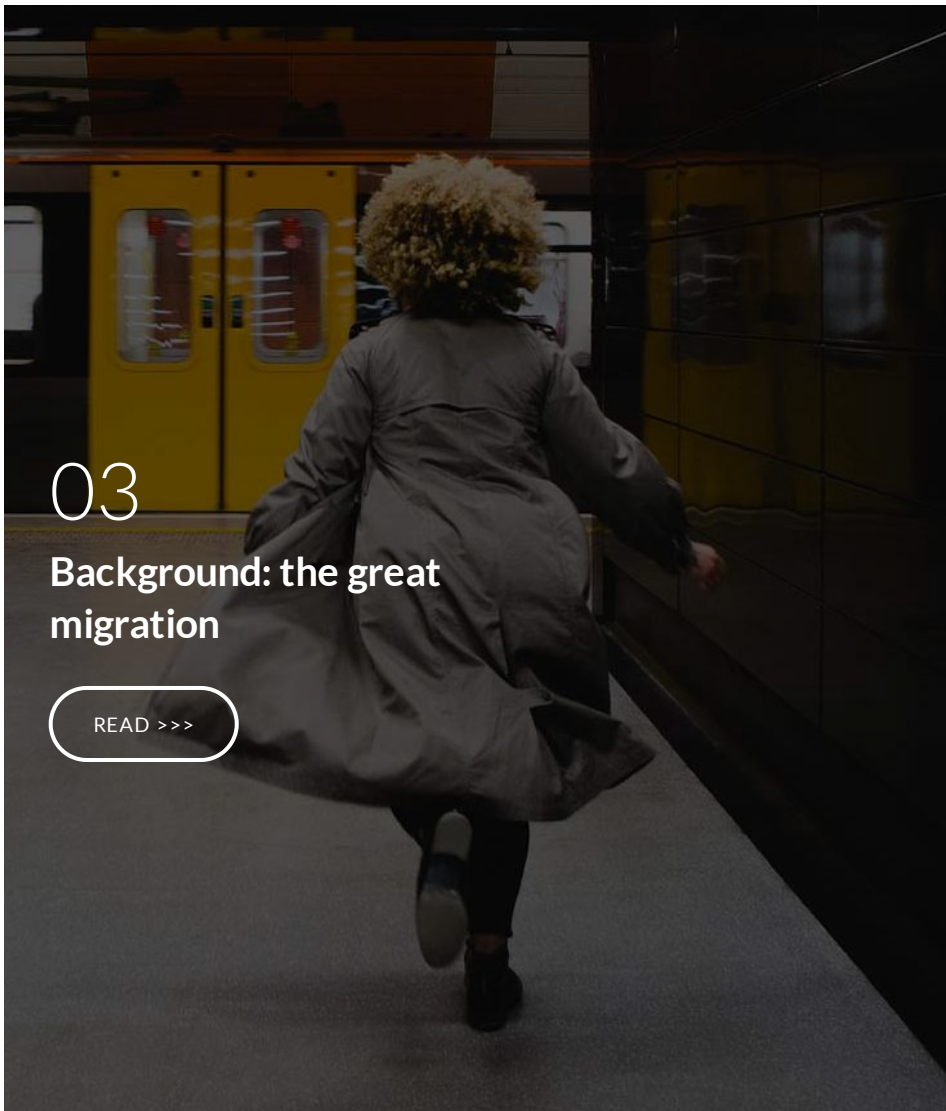
For some businesses, this will represent a major cultural change. But for any that consider themselves forward looking, it is a necessary one. It is only through this change in emphasis that organisations will start thinking about their people as individuals – and start valuing them as such.

The breaking down of the barriers between home life and work life has demonstrated that this is a necessary revolution, as well as a long overdue one.

Many businesses claim to be focused on their people, but only by putting the part of the business that deals with their staff at the forefront of the decision making process can they match this rhetoric with action.

OPEN

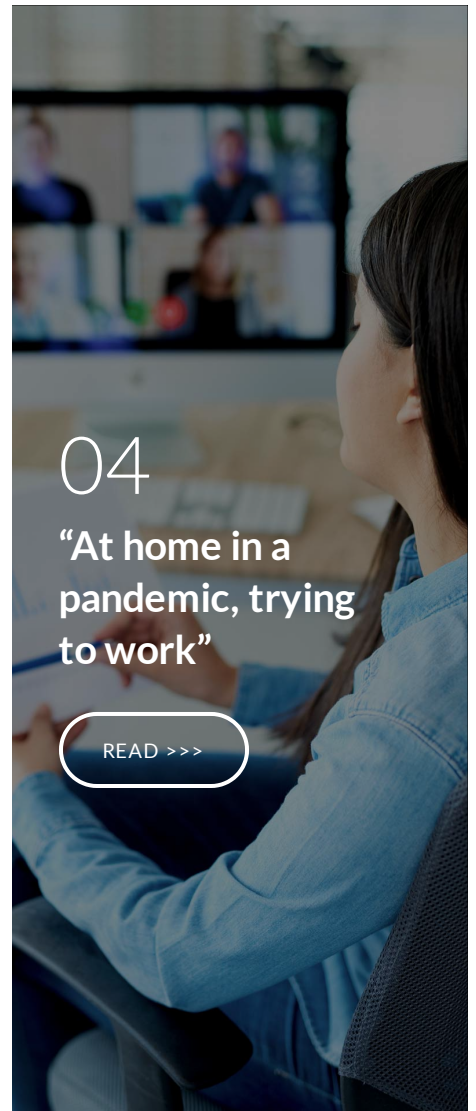
*We interviewed a number of leaders and specialists as part of this research. Their quotes are intended to illustrate various points, but should not necessarily be taken as representing the views of Disruptive Innovators Network or Campbell Tickell.*



03

Background: the great migration

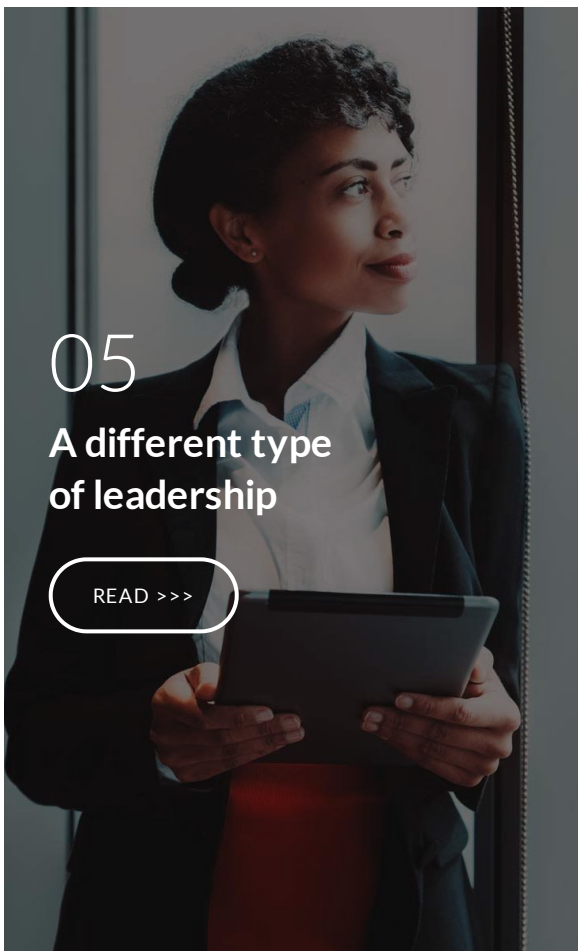
[READ >>>](#)



04

“At home in a pandemic, trying to work”

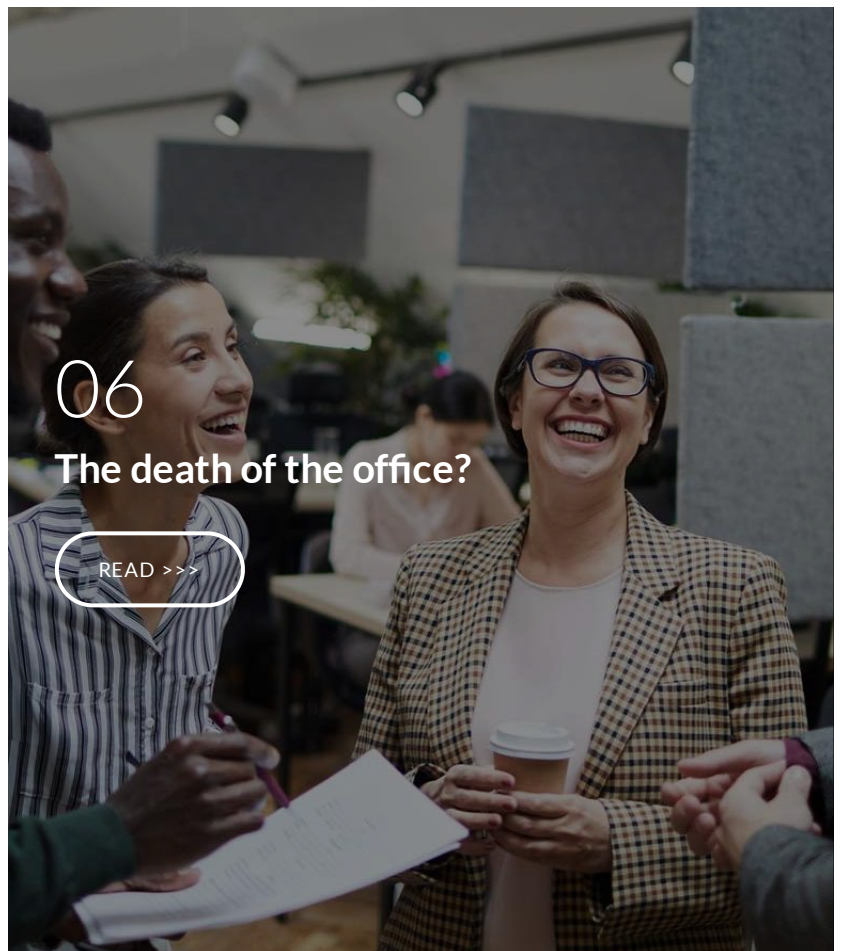
[READ >>>](#)



05

A different type of leadership

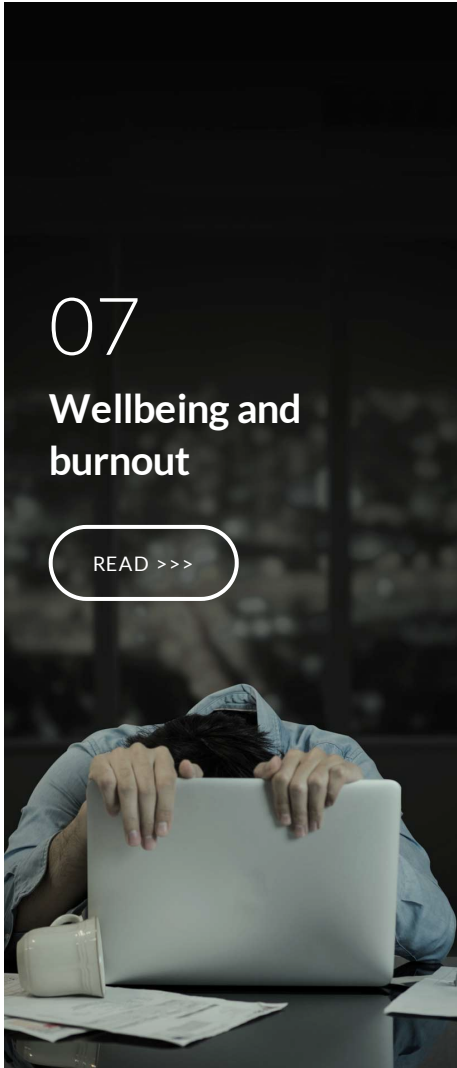
[READ >>>](#)



06

The death of the office?

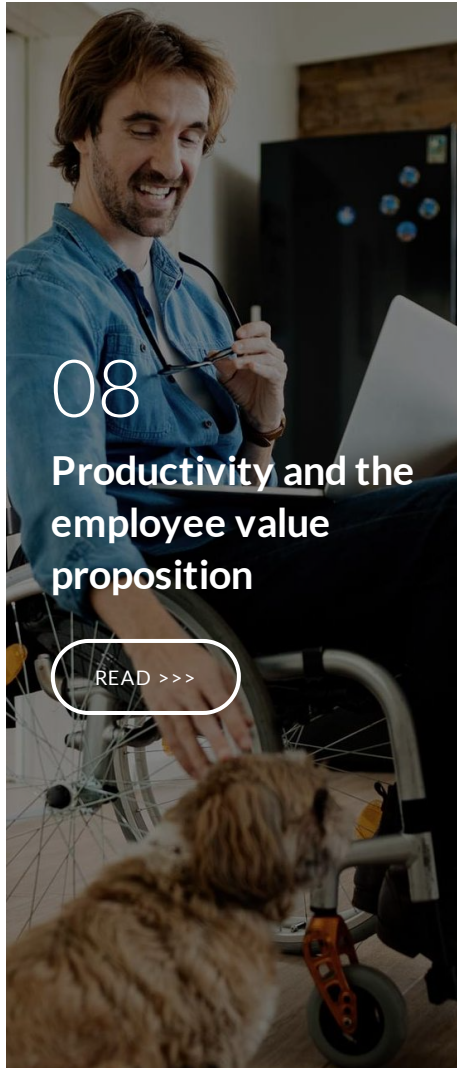
[READ >>>](#)



07

## Wellbeing and burnout

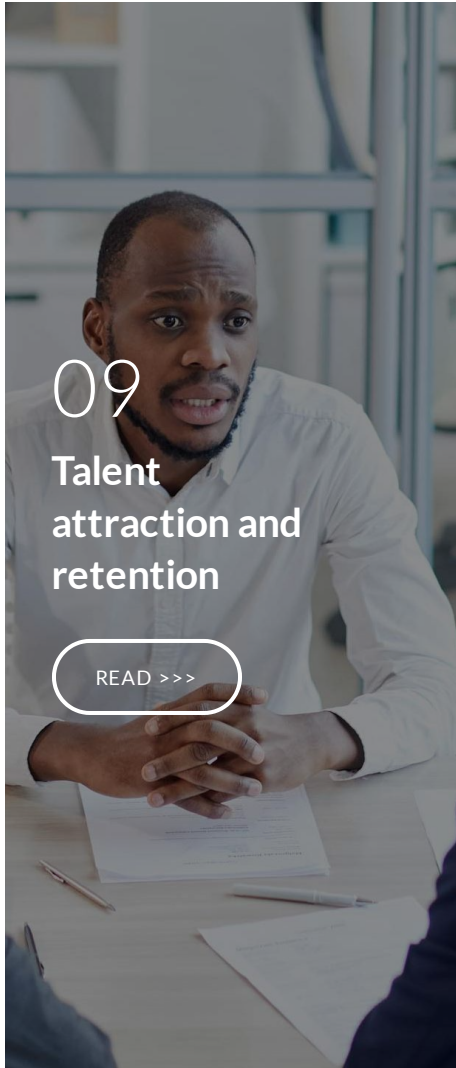
[READ >>>](#)



08

## Productivity and the employee value proposition

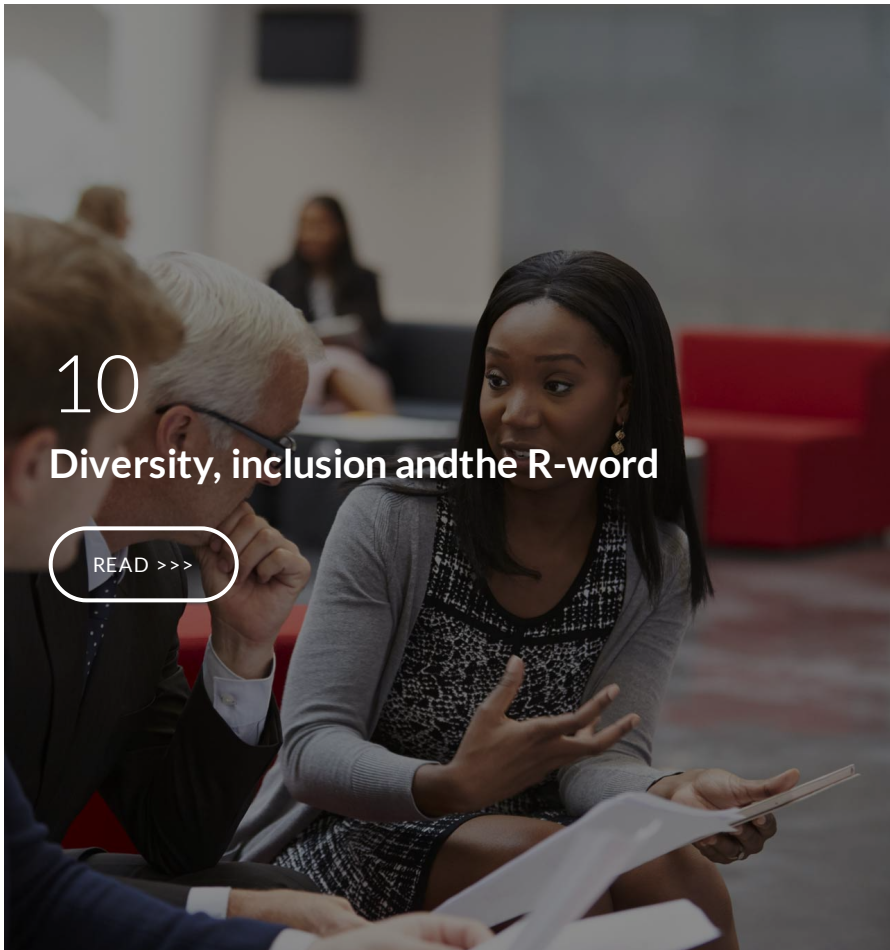
[READ >>>](#)



09

## Talent attraction and retention

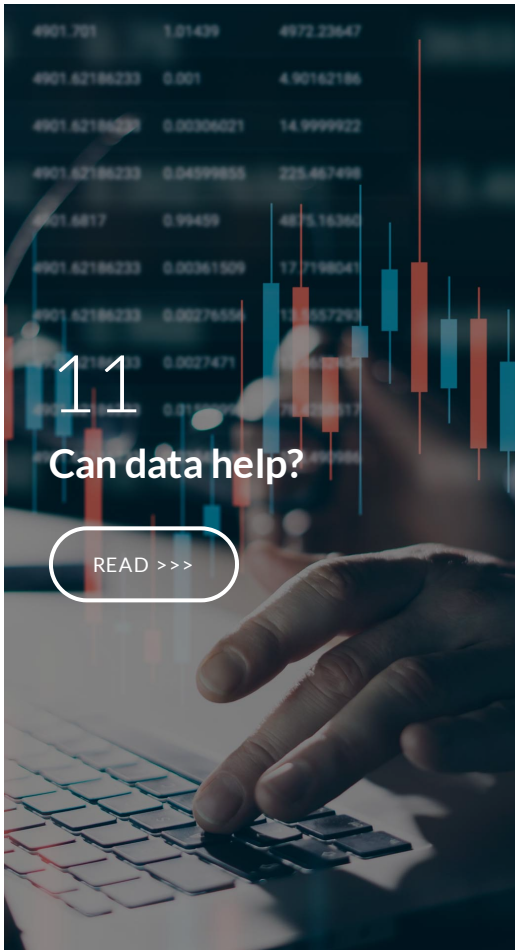
[READ >>>](#)



10

## Diversity, inclusion and the R-word

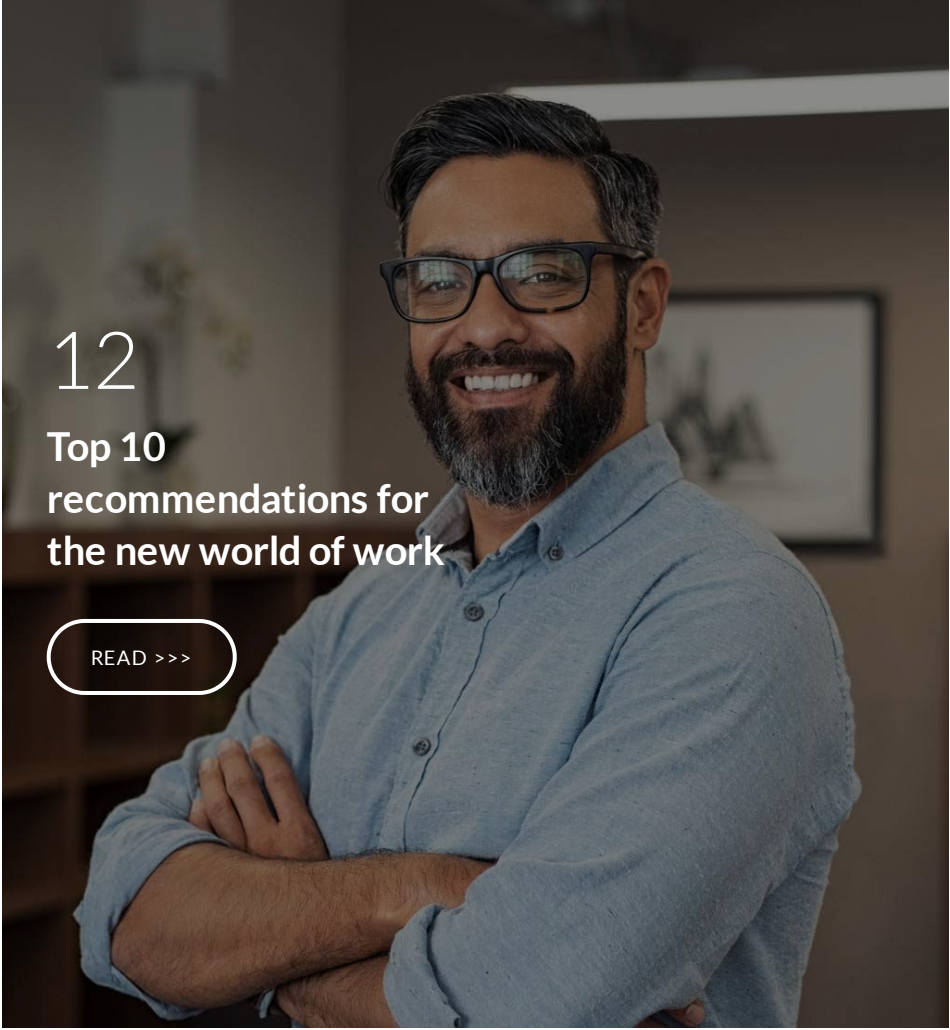
[READ >>>](#)



11

## Can data help?

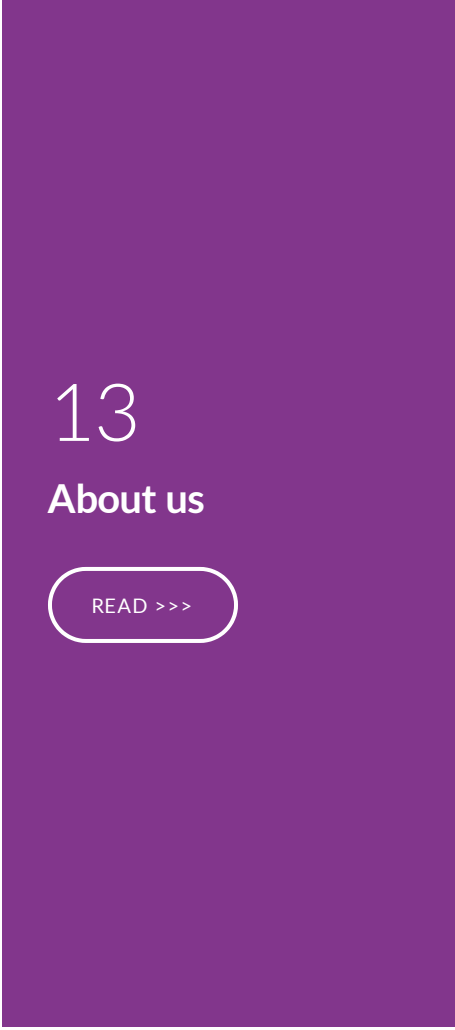
[READ >>>](#)



12

Top 10  
recommendations for  
the new world of work

[READ >>>](#)



13

About us

[READ >>>](#)

# Background: the great migration

The Coronavirus pandemic precipitated possibly the biggest single change in the working lives of millions of people, virtually overnight, as offices emptied and workers had to set up shop at home.

Companies embarked on organisational overhauls that would normally have taken months if not years, but had to be completed in days. New IT systems were set up instantaneously and the workers of the world got used to telling their bosses that they were “on mute”.

For many organisations, the pandemic has been a catalyst to what was happening already. The transition to agile working, for instance, was already well under way for some, while others were still further back in the process.

## Home working here to stay

And while the great migration to working from home full time is one that took place because of an unforeseen emergency, it also looks like it might be here to stay long term for many of us. **Research by Legal & General and think tank Demos** found that nearly two thirds of the UK’s working population were forced to change their place of work because of the pandemic. But perhaps even more tellingly, 79% said they would like to continue some form of remote working in the future.

Such a shift towards home working – or at least non-office working – would represent a seismic change for most organisations, as well as a huge challenge for those charged with overseeing it. That’s because home working not only changes the location of work, it changes the way we work too. And in turn, it changes what workers require and demand from their employers.

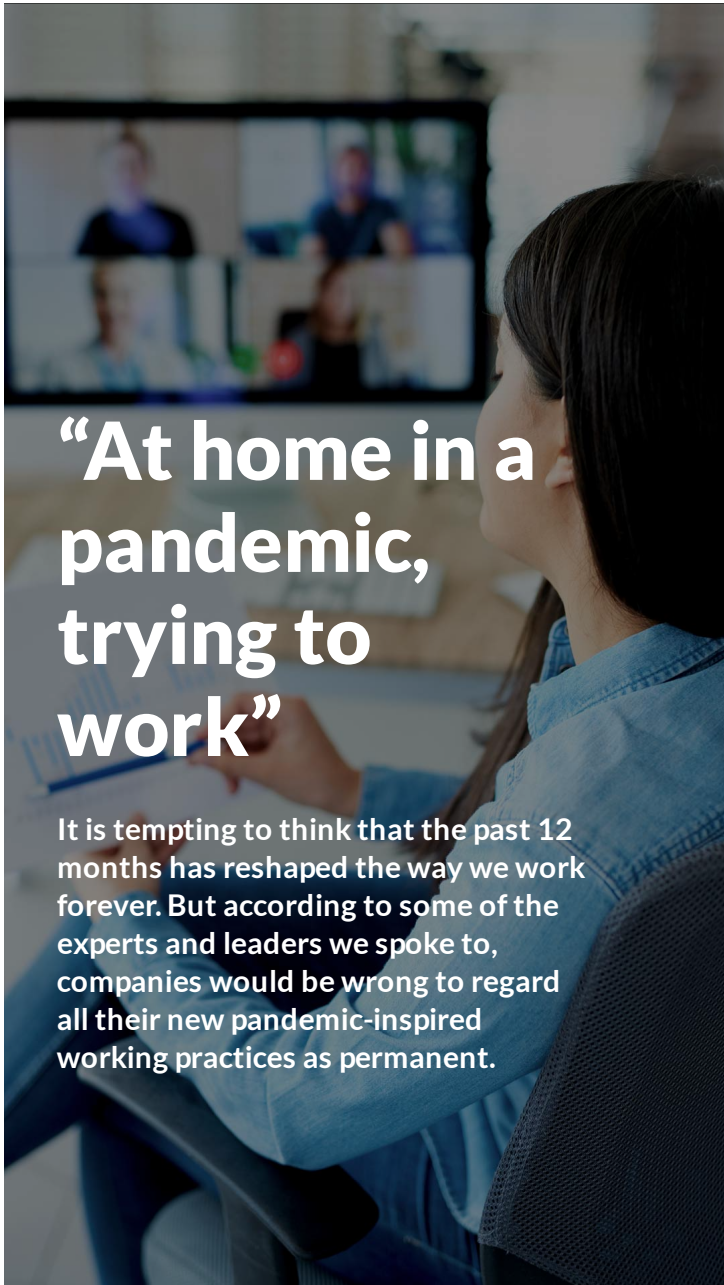
Organisations will face the challenge of maintaining a culturally and organisationally cohesive workforce with some (formerly mainly office-based) staff working on a hybrid basis and some – given the nature of their jobs – continuing to work at the business’s premises or otherwise on the road.

Organisations are going to have to ask very different questions and understand in more granular detail what their employee needs and circumstances are to facilitate a new agreement for how and where they want to work.

## Need for new leadership skills

Leaders and anyone working in the ‘people’ function of organisations will have to interact with employees in a different way. They will have to develop new skills and competencies, learn to expect different outcomes, and adapt how they think about the employee value proposition. Pay, reward, recruitment and retention will all feel the effect of this new contract between employer and employee – and the leaders of the future will have to be alive to the negative changes that might accrue, just as much as the things that might change for the better.

Inevitably, when the pace of change is such as it has been over the past year, there are missteps along the way. But which of the changes that have taken place over the last year are here to stay? And what do organisations have to do to make sure they are in a position to benefit from them? This report will shine a light on these key issues and help leaders start to think about what comes next.



# “At home in a pandemic, trying to work”

It is tempting to think that the past 12 months has reshaped the way we work forever. But according to some of the experts and leaders we spoke to, companies would be wrong to regard all their new pandemic-inspired working practices as permanent.

“I think that the mistake a lot of organisations are making is taking decisions based on this period,” says Claire Harvey, founder of organisational consultancy Anatta. “This period is not ‘working from home’; this period was at home in a pandemic, trying to work. And those things are entirely different.”

Harvey has identified some of the biggest missteps that companies she works with have made during the pandemic. The first, she says, is to try to replicate the way they worked pre-COVID-19 by moving it “into a remote setting”.

“They try and do the same things in the same way but with everyone attached to a laptop rather than them being physically in a room, and of course that doesn’t work because of the limitations of technology [and] because of the way people work.”

## New ways to work

A second common mistake is employers expecting their employees to all respond to their new situation in a uniform way: “And of course they don’t,” explains Harvey. “There’s a pandemic going on so there’s a whole level of anxiety and uncertainty and change in people’s lives before you even talk about work.”

What this means is that leaders and those in organisations’ people functions have had to learn and deploy a new set of skills over a very short time period.

For Thomas Davies, who left Google to found data-driven organisational intelligence and analytics firm Temporal, this period has shown leaders the importance of having an HR or people function at the heart of their businesses.

As he explains: “A vast majority of people within the HR function [of companies] are non strategic - they have no budget, they have no authority, they have no voice or buying power within a company.”

**“A lot of people I think, would love to see the function of HR and HR practitioners move up the value chain.”**

“We have seen in the last nine to 12 months, a lot of HR directors being thrust onto the board in trying to help a company manage and muddle their way through the pandemic. A lot of people, I think, would love to see the function of HR and HR practitioners move up the value chain [to offer] strategic insight.”



#### HR on the board

Harvey agrees that making the HR function central to an organisation’s strategic thinking is a long overdue move that the pandemic has helped bring about. She says: “I think of that move for HR as more of a part of the wider governance of the organisation: central to decisions, enabling thinking about how to embed the values and how to actually make the organisation thrive.

It was already well in train but I think it’s more important than ever now, because when you think about a hybrid environment, you think about that kind of future-ready organisation that’s much more agile, much more geographically dispersed, much more fluid in how it works.

“The devil of that is in the everyday behaviours. It is not in the policies, it’s not in the structures, it’s in the everyday experience of people and how that plays out and that’s where I think HR needs to move much further away from policies and processes.”

#### CONTRIBUTORS:

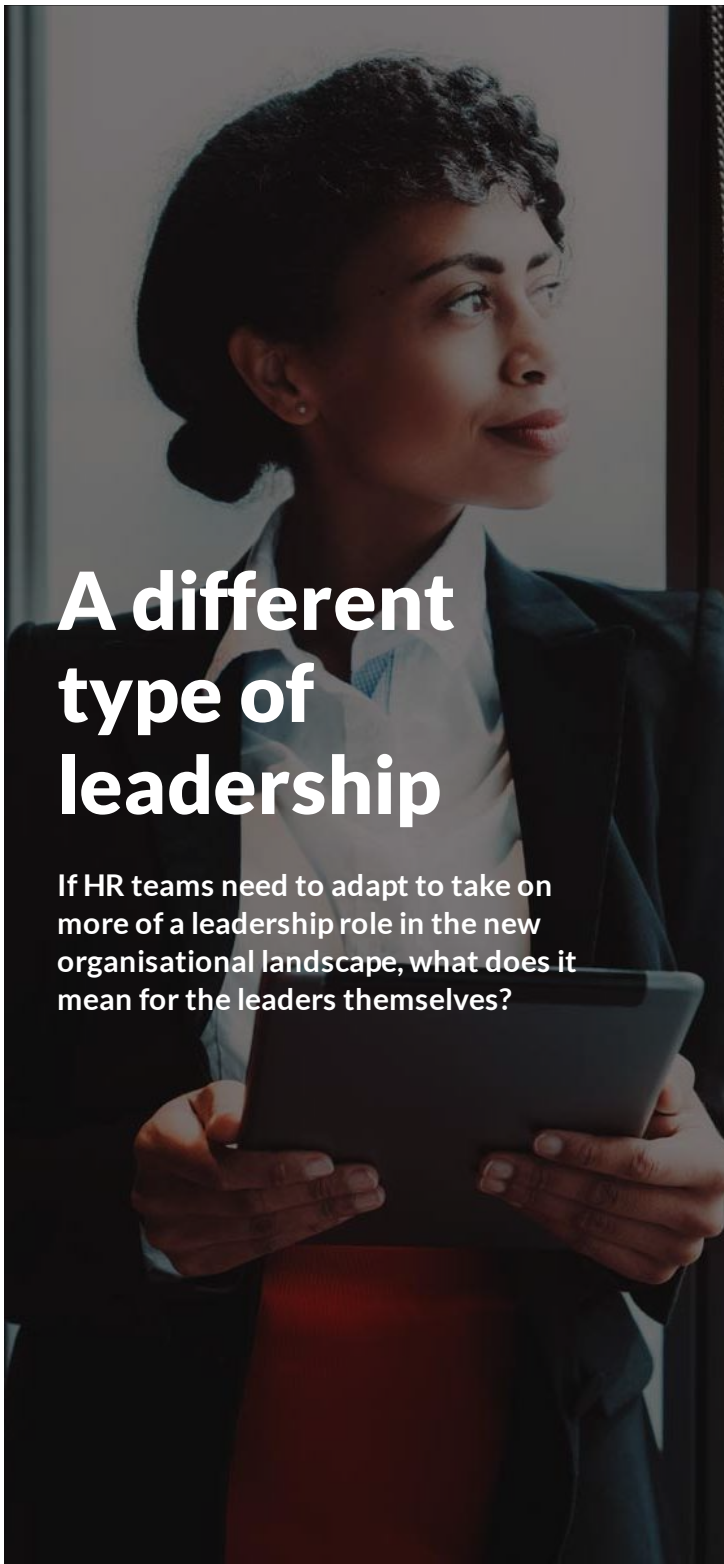


**Claire Harvey**  
Founder, Anatta, and global inclusion lead, Vodafone



**Thomas Davies**  
Founder, Temporal





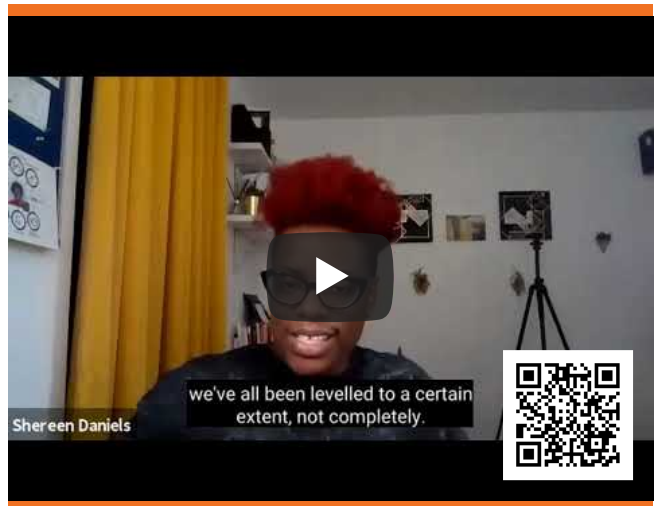
# A different type of leadership

If HR teams need to adapt to take on more of a leadership role in the new organisational landscape, what does it mean for the leaders themselves?

Shereen Daniels is Managing Director of HR Rewired and former Head of People at Caffè Nero. She started her own consultancy advising companies on culture change, with a particular focus on anti-racism. Daniels says that the pandemic has transformed what leaders look like, along with the ways they interact with their people.

“CEOs have changed,” she says. “They are shedding the layers of who they thought they had to be and recognising that we’ve been levelled to a certain extent. We’ve all had to recalibrate what it means to be who we are.

“For some people who are used to the formality of being a leader, I think that’s probably been a more challenging journey to take. Because with those individuals, there’s always the concern that the more relaxed and informal they are, the less they’ll be taken seriously, and the less they’ll be respected.”



## Leadership leveller

As Anita Jones, chief executive at Freebridge Community Housing, puts it, the pandemic has forced leadership teams to adopt a “more authentic and informal” style. “People want leaders in their organisations that they feel have some empathy with what they’re juggling,” she says.

**“CEOs have changed. They are shedding the layers of who they thought they had to be and recognising that we’ve been leveled to a certain extent.”**

What all of this means is that the manager-employee relationship has gone through a subtle but significant change. Bosses no longer monitor their workers, and surveillance has given way to – in an ideal world – mutual trust and respect. Moreover, management’s focus needs to shift from inputs to outputs, and this change in mindset will take time to achieve, for both managers and staff.

Temporall’s Thomas Davies describes what has happened to the interface between leaders and their employees as “a dilution of command and control”. The means through which leaders once demonstrated their position, surveyed their teams, and offered organisations a sense of structure – often through the physical environment of an office – have disappeared

#### Work post the office

He explains: “Leadership teams have never had it so difficult because they can’t see and sense and feel what’s going on in their company. So you’ve got a situation where command and control doesn’t really work in highly distributed workforce environments, and secondly, as leaders, we’re all missing those social cues that allow us to respond naturally to what’s actually going on.”

This new relationship – one in which the physical closeness between colleagues has been removed – calls for more responsibility from employees and a more sophisticated approach to management from their bosses.

But are we really about see the end of the office environment completely? If so, what will replace it and how will organisations have to adapt?

CONTRIBUTORS:



**Shereen Daniels**  
Managing Director, HR Rewired



**Anita Jones**  
Chief Executive, Freebridge  
Community Housing

SHARE THIS PAGE

CAMPBELL  
TICKELL



# The death of the office?

COVID-19 has shown many organisations that their employees can work productively from home - but it has also highlighted the important role the office plays in workers' wellbeing.



The pandemic has taught us that 'work' is much more than just a physical space. And yet, at the same time, many of the most fundamental changes that lockdown life has brought about for workers stem from the fact that the location of work for millions of people has shifted.

Huge corporations, such as HSBC, have already announced that they will return to work post-COVID-19 with reduced office footprints after realising that many of their staff can work remotely without any notable drop in productivity. At the same time, they have seen the opportunity to reduce overheads by reducing the cost of leasing and operating physical working environments.

## Space saving

This was absolutely a trend for businesses well before the pandemic, but COVID-19 has acted as rocket fuel to accelerate the process.

Nevertheless, the office is unlikely to die off completely. Instead it will metamorphose into something new, leaving organisations with the question of how can they make these spaces work better for both their workers and their customers.

"The office will be a really outdated word because I think what that space has got to do now is fill the gap that people are missing at home," says Helena Moore, a former director of people experience at housing association Bromford and now an associate director at the Disruptive Innovators Network.

## Hybrid working

She says that what this means is that offices will be part of a 'hybrid' working experience, whereby people work from several locations. Meanwhile, office spaces themselves will transform to serve a more social purpose.

"People are missing the social interaction, they're missing natters around the water cooler, that sort of thing. So the whole thing around design is really important, and how you create a design that can accommodate quite large numbers of people coming into a space."

**“The office will be a really outdated word because I think what that space has got to do now is fill the gap that people are missing at home.”**



Moore adds: “When you look at that whole balance of hybrid and what people are really missing, it’s workspaces that have an unashamed social purpose moving forward for colleagues because it’s that piece that people have said that they’re missing. So if we want people to be happy, healthy and well, what is it we can do to plug those gaps with that space being a part of it?”

Beyond that, the office will need to fill a number of roles: promoting collaboration, informal sharing of information, facilitating induction of new staff and, crucially, a hub that is designed to maintain and develop an organisation’s culture – something that is much harder to deliver in an online environment.



#### **Reflecting wellbeing**

While most workers during the pandemic did want to be Roamers, the number of Fixed workers was determined by both job role and personal circumstances. In other words, wellbeing considerations were given the same weight as business needs.

In addition, Bromford tried to maintain a principle of fairness by wrapping various benefits around the different working styles – for example by introducing coffee cards for Field workers and home office set-up kits for Roamers.

The hybrid – or blended – approach is likely to be taken up by huge numbers of organisations post-pandemic, but there is unlikely to be a ‘one size fits all’ solution. Ajman Ali, group director for neighbourhood and housing at Hackney Council, believes there’s been “a yearning for people to come back into the office, [but] not necessarily 100% of the time”.

Throughout the pandemic, Hackney Council has been carrying out regular staff surveys. Ali says that these show that workers favour a mixed approach, whereby they split their time between home and office on a 60:40 or 70:30 ratio.

### Balancing the blend

Even if the majority of workers don't want to return to the office full time, some are wary that the end of the traditional office set-up could further entrench the use of outsourcing as a way for organisations to cut costs. John Gray, a member of public sector union UNISON's National Executive Council, says the outsourcing trend is a cause of concern for his members.

"It is really tempting to close offices and get more people working from home. And outsourcing to companies who wouldn't treat their workers as well as traditional local authorities or large housing associations is always a threat when times are tough. But most outsourcing is entirely bogus."

Gray adds: "The only way it works is because new entrants are taken on on inferior terms or conditions, and that worries me, but the change is dressed up as innovation. They say 'we're going to move people to a more specialist employer', but the real cause is cutting pay, cutting pensions and cutting conditions."

#### CONTRIBUTORS:



**Helena Moore**  
Associate Director,  
Disruptive  
Innovators  
Network



**Ajman Ali**  
Group Director for  
Neighbourhood and  
Housing, Hackney  
Council



**John Gray**  
National Executive  
Council member,  
UNISON (speaking  
in a personal  
capacity)

#### SHARE THIS PAGE

CAMPBELL  
TICKELL



# Wellbeing and burnout

Managing workloads while people are working from multiple locations and in situations where interactions are less frequent and more formalised is a huge challenge for leaders, managers and HR teams – and one that requires a different skillset than they may have used in a traditional environment.



UNISON National Executive Council member John Gray says he has seen cases of workers “doing piles of stuff late at night, early starts, including weekends”, and warns managers to keep an eye out for signs of burnout.

“I would hope that employers do have the emotional intelligence to realise this is bad for the organisation. And when we do get people that are burnt out, they do tend to be people whose workloads have been horrendous. I’ve come across some really good managers, who will actually, in a professional, supportive way, push back on people who send them stuff at 10 o’clock on a Saturday evening.”

Gray adds that this requires leadership rather than just management from those at the top of organisations. “Some managers, you can give them all the mentoring, all the training and support, but they haven’t got the ability to lead people. So I think that the pandemic has exposed weaknesses. And this particular new way of working, which is going to continue in part, requires I think some special skills.”

## Time to trust

Ajman Ali at Hackney Council suggests that these new skills might involve managers moving away from the idea of being ‘watchdogs’ over their staff, and instead learn to trust that they are doing the job.

He says: “From a management perspective, managers perhaps might have been previously not as supportive, or perhaps there might have been issues of trust with people working remotely. That has ebbed away as it has been seen that people can work quite productively in their home environment.”

The twin problems of burnout and wellbeing are not exclusively problems for those working from home. Hackney’s experience as an employer demonstrates the danger of focusing on those workers. As Ali explains, the new paradigm can create a two-tier system – especially for any employer that has large numbers of frontline workers.

**“I’ve come across some really good managers, who will actually, in a professional, supportive way, push back on people who send them stuff at 10 o’clock on a Saturday evening.”**

“What we did discover also is that while we were focusing as an organisation on the wellbeing of people working from home, we were very keen to not lose sight of the fact that there was a large proportion of our staff who were still having to come to work, using public transport, etc. They would have been quite apprehensive about that and we had to make sure that we didn’t forget about their anxieties.”

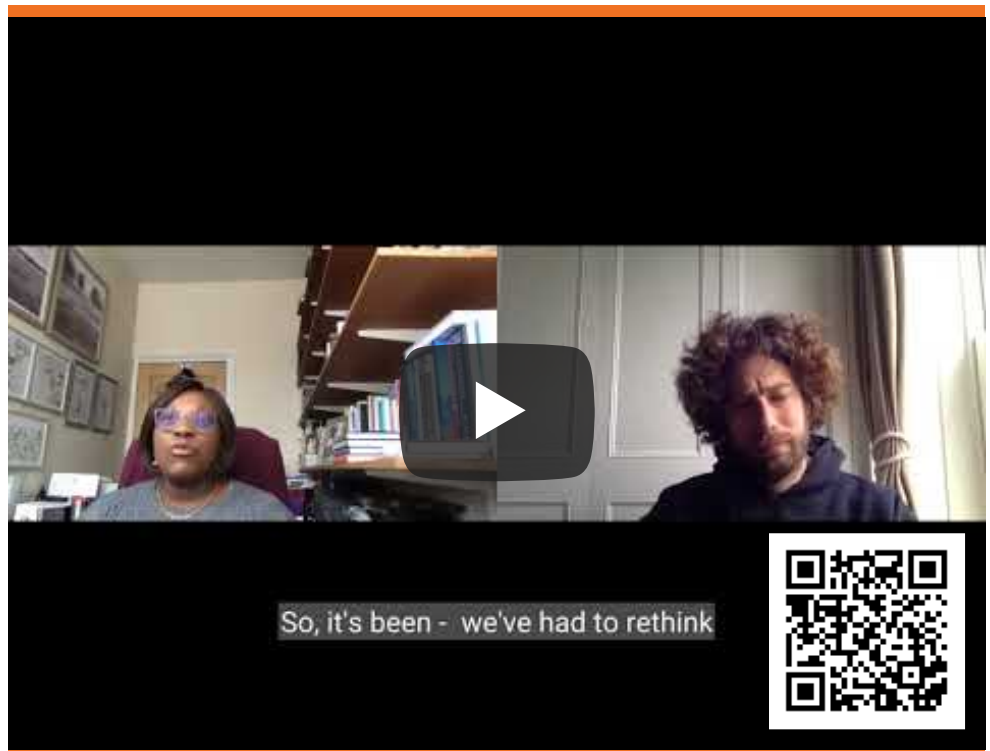
Ali adds: “We were able to respond as an organisation, not only to the issues raised by people who might be working from home, but also other frontline staff who physically didn’t have that choice. And it was really important to try and minimise that divide between them and us: the managers and the frontline staff.”

#### Employee engagement

Hackney Council has made sure it is engaging actively with its 4,600 employees on a regular basis ever since lockdown began in spring 2020. It has held virtual leadership meetings with up to 900 people logged on at a time, in which questions can be asked of senior leaders, while leaders have also carried out a constant dialogue with union representatives.

Francesca Okosi, director of people and organisational effectiveness at The Nursing and Midwifery Council, agrees that looking for signs that people are struggling has become a vital new skill for anyone working in HR.

“It has really been tough, and in some respects has had to make us rethink how we support the organisation, how we support leaders, and how we support our colleagues at work,” she says. “We are going into people’s homes in a space where some people may not be comfortable; people who are living in homes where there’s a number of them in the room. So we’ve had to think about not just the kind of physical things you give people, but also the way in which people are engaged and communicated with.”



So, it's been - we've had to rethink



Okosi adds: “You have to find a different way as HR professionals to help the organisation, to find a different way of creating those spontaneous conversations and those abilities to try and understand what’s going on with a person. But it’s not the same. You have to manufacture the kinds of informal ‘let’s have a coffee’ sessions that would just happen in a physical office space. You’ve got to increase the amount of communication with your team members.

“I think we kind of went into the pandemic, thinking ‘you’re working from home, everything’s okay, you’ve got the equipment, you should be able to get on with it.’ And there are a number of people who that has actually broken, and a number of people who’ve really come out the other side of it not in a good way and it’s going to take some time for them to recover.”

### The role of kindness

What this shows is that some of the new skills that HR professionals and leaders will revolve around sensitivity to individual circumstances, and how to adapt policy accordingly.

Kindness will also play a role. Indeed, Okosi sees a positive from some aspects of how organisational development and HR professionals have responded to the crisis by increasing engagement with their teams. She says that at her last organisation, which she left during the first lockdown in 2020, “people actually said that they felt far better communicated with during the pandemic than they did pre the pandemic”.

But if those conversations are getting better and employers are on the lookout for warning signs around burnout and overwork, what might that mean on the other side of the ledger for productivity?

### CONTRIBUTORS:



**John Gray**  
National Executive  
Council member,  
UNISON (speaking  
in a personal  
capacity)



**Ajman Ali**  
Group Director for  
Neighbourhood and  
Housing, Hackney  
Council



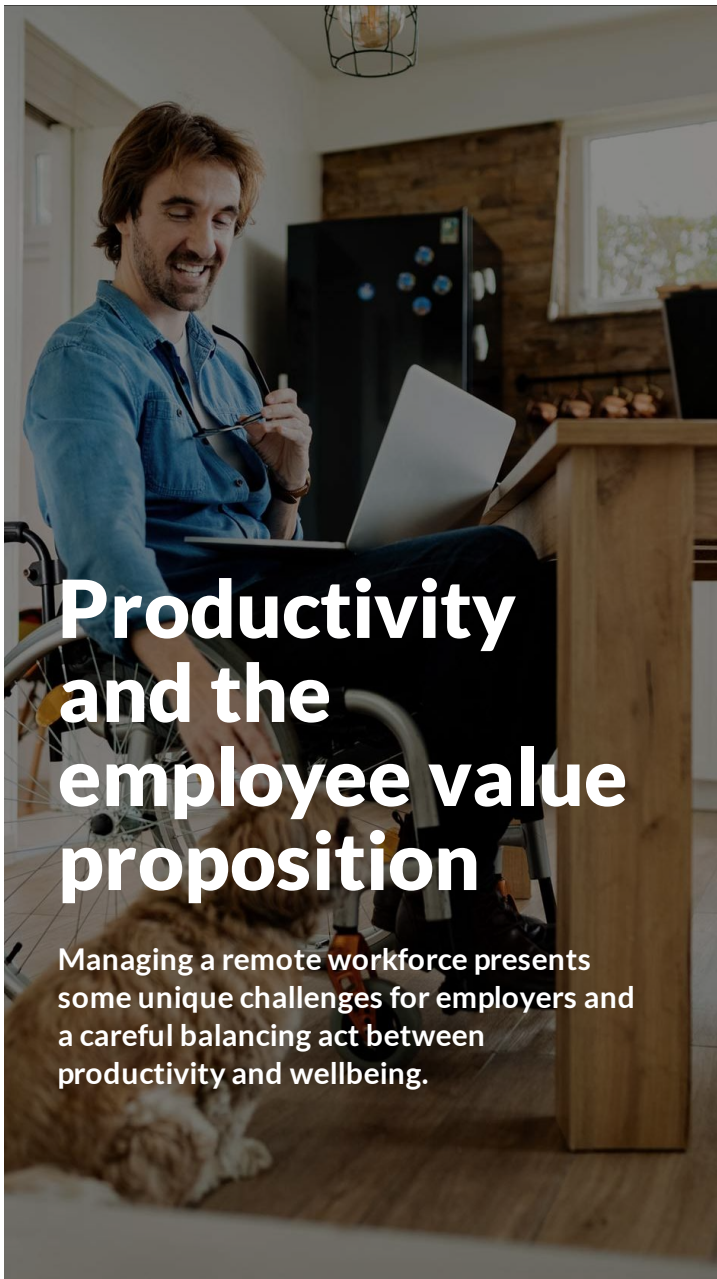
**Francesca Okosi**  
Director of People  
and Organisational  
Effectiveness, The  
Nursing and  
Midwifery Council

### SHARE THIS PAGE

CAMPBELL  
TICKELL







# Productivity and the employee value proposition

Managing a remote workforce presents some unique challenges for employers and a careful balancing act between productivity and wellbeing.

“I think for HR professionals, we’re still trying to work out how to manage performance in a very different way,” says The Nursing and Midwifery Council’s Francesca Okosi. She adds that companies will have to “help managers think about how you’ve managed performance based on output and outcome, not based on presenteeism”.

“It’s going to be interesting to see what happens beyond this quite intense period, because I think a lot of people have put in far more hours than they would have otherwise put in if they were in a physical office space.”

## Unpaid overtime surge

The evidence certainly supports this assertion. **Recent data from the Office for National Statistics** shows that people working from home in 2020 did two thirds more unpaid overtime than their colleagues who went into the office or their usual place of work. They were also more likely to work past 6pm, took fewer sick days, and were less likely to earn promotion.

For some organisations, addressing this issue will involve a change of emphasis when it comes to output or even a limit on how many hours they will allow their staff to work. For Anita Jones at Freebridge it is about placing employee wellbeing at the heart of how you view the employee value proposition.

“Where we feel we have a problem is that people are not constructing their working day in a way that is good for their wellbeing,” she says. “So some are embracing it and loving it, and others are working too long and too much and can’t create natural boundaries. And so for us, part of using data will be how do we agree targets and outcomes that are not about time spent at a PC, they’re about the actual productivity. And that will be a shift for a company like ours, because people feel guilty about not answering that call.”

**“Part of using data will be how do we agree targets and outcomes that are not about time spent at a PC, they’re about the actual productivity.”**

## Employee value proposition

Jones adds: “We see a very different value proposition about what is a job well done during the period. Equally on the wellbeing front, it’s being aware of the impact on your organisation from the pandemic. What I mean by that is there will be employees who emerge more resilient as a result of the challenges, and there’ll be employees who emerge less resilient as a result of the challenges. And it’s about recognising that individual aspect to this. That’s something you have to take on board in terms of mobilising your workforce to achieve over this time.”

At Freebridge, Jones and her leadership team are trying to address the wellbeing issue personally. They have trained members of staff to become mental health advocates, while the leaders themselves put together weekly videos of themselves in their home settings to demonstrate what she calls “authentic leadership”.

On a broader level, Freebridge is examining its entire operating model “from top to bottom”, but is doing so through a series of business-wide consultation events taking place throughout the spring. The idea is that solutions can come from anywhere and everywhere within the business.

CONTRIBUTORS:



**Anita Jones**  
Chief Executive, Freebridge  
Community Housing



**Francesca Okosi**  
Director of People and Organisational  
Effectiveness, The Nursing and  
Midwifery Council

SHARE THIS PAGE

CAMPBELL  
TICKELL





# Talent attraction and retention

Many of the changes discussed thus far – not least the shift to remote working and the reimagining of the employee value proposition – will have consequences for how organisations compensate their workers.

**“People’s ideals and what they value about life are very different as a result of what’s happened in the last 12 months”**

“You are going to need to think about reward structures in a different way, because people will want to think about what does reward look like for me,” confirms The Nursing and Midwifery Council’s Francesca Okosi.

She says reduced or modified hours, the ability to work from different locations and other flexibilities will have to be built into pay and reward systems. “So I think employers are going to have to think very carefully about what the total package is,” she adds. “It isn’t just going to be a salary, a bit of London weighting, a bit of performance pay. People’s ideals and what they value about life are very different as a result of what’s happened in the last 12 months.”

## Rewarding roles

Even before the pandemic, different generations had a different attitude towards their reward packages, with salary perhaps becoming less of a determining factor in whether you joined or stayed at a company.

“I think that was already becoming the case for millennials, but I think it’s broader now,” says Okosi. “People are thinking about the quality of their life, and also their development. So the more qualitative things, as opposed to just the financial things, are becoming important. Increasingly now I’m seeing candidates ask the question: ‘What are the expectations about flexibility? Am I going to be expected to come into the office, or are you thinking differently?’”

Some organisations, such as Johnnie Johnson Housing Trust, have introduced ‘lifestyle contracts’ which change as employee circumstances change. But there’s another element at play too, beyond demands for greater flexibility or a different pay structure – and that’s culture.

## Power of purpose

Thomas Davies at Temporall believes candidates will look at an organisation’s purpose and values just as much as – if not more than – what they are prepared to pay.

“There is absolutely no doubt whatsoever in the last five years that those companies of all shapes and sizes that have focused their efforts on purpose, have attracted a wider demographic circle of people that are generally magnetised to their business,” he says.

“And that is not just local tech start-ups. Companies that have orientated their brand and their identity towards purpose have continued to win the talent war, as long as it’s congruent and authentic.”

CONTRIBUTORS:



**Francesca Okosi**  
Director of People and Organisational  
Effectiveness, The Nursing and  
Midwifery Council

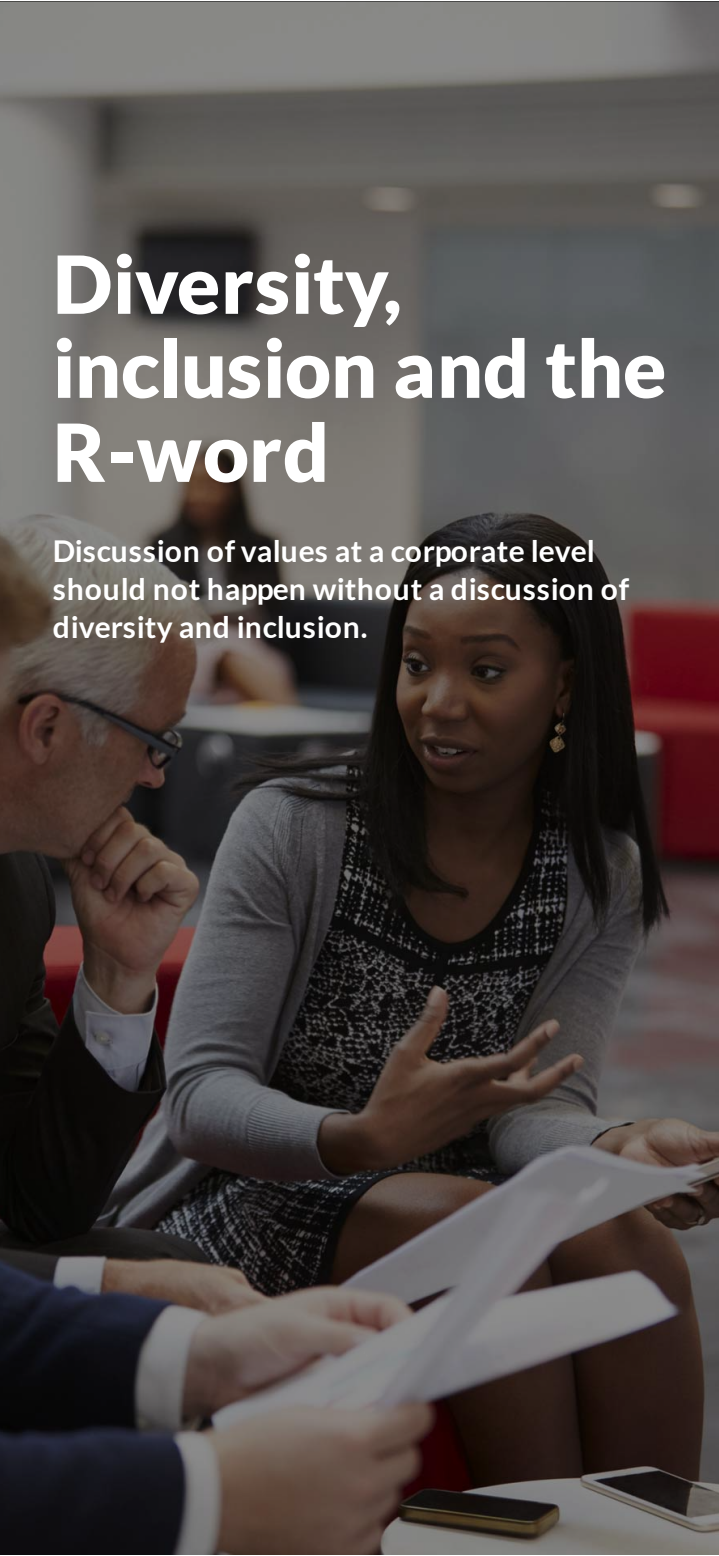


**Thomas Davies**  
Founder, Temporal

SHARE THIS PAGE

CAMPBELL  
TICKELL





# Diversity, inclusion and the R-word

Discussion of values at a corporate level should not happen without a discussion of diversity and inclusion.

HR Rewired's Shereen Daniels began focusing her work more and more on the issue of racism within organisations, following the killing of George Floyd and the mass global protests that followed in the summer of 2020. She says this moment coming alongside the Coronavirus pandemic made her rethink the potential for change

"We all know that we're living in that volatile and changing world, but we've never really understood what it truly meant, until the virus," she explains.

She says shifting the way companies are organised so quickly showed her that change in other areas was also possible. "It begs the question what other things could we have speeded up if we really wanted to?"

## Acting on racism

To her, the answer to that question is a word that most corporate leaders shy away from: racism.

Daniels says: "Everyone has only wanted to jump into the diversity and inclusion conversation, because they've never wanted to talk about the issue of racism. This is even though diversity and inclusion came from the civil rights movement to ensure fairness and equity for black people.

"So diversity and inclusion got hijacked away from the very people it was meant to help in order to make organisations feel better. People say 'we have a diversity issue' and I say: 'No, you have a racism issue, and diversity is an output.' But for years we've treated it as an input. It's an output, and it should come last."

## Moral courage

Daniels says talking about and tackling racism is "the ultimate change programme" and takes courage from both leaders and within companies' people function.

"I think, moral courage will be a recognised skill that's needed. And it's a skill that comes with being able to de-prioritise your own comfort to speak out about what wrongdoings are happening in the workplace on behalf of employees to address the imbalance of power."

**“People say ‘we have a diversity issue’ and I say: ‘No, you have a racism issue, and diversity is an output.’ But for years we’ve treated it as an input. It’s an output, and it should come last.”**



Daniels adds: “Because in HR unfortunately we’re very conscious of who we’re hired by. Technically by our name, we’re meant to be there for the employees but really we’re not, we’re there for the organisation to do as the organisation needs to. But I think because of everything that’s happening not just with racism, but with all sorts of society’s ills, these issues are now converging into the experiences. This affects how colleagues engage with each other and how they engage with customers and the global playground that we now have to serve. So I think there’s going to be a call for moral leadership.”

Ashleigh Ainsley, co-founder of Colorintech, works with some of the world’s biggest tech companies, advising them on diversity and inclusion in that sector. He agrees that change must be top-down if it is to have any impact.

#### **Strategic imperative**

“The first thing is it comes from leadership,” he says. “There needs to be a strategy around actually addressing these issues. One of the barriers we find is that sometimes we’ll work with organisations and it’s not really a strategic initiative or imperative for the organisation, which often means it’s hard to institute things like culture change.”

Plenty of organisations now have roles focused on diversity and inclusion, such as chief diversity officer – a job title that has become more common in recent years. But Ainsley says that he has seen too many of these roles not given sufficient resource to tackle the issue.

“You wouldn’t give your head of sales the task of going to sell your products with no salespeople,” he says. “You wouldn’t tell the head of marketing to go and redo all of our marketing material and not give them any budget to hire anyone to do that but that’s what a chief diversity officer has been told to do.”

#### **Sustainable impact**

It’s a point that Claire Harvey at Anatta echoes: “Historically, we’ve talked about a business case for diversity and inclusion and all of those things. I don’t know about you but I’ve never heard a business case for financial governance. I’ve never been asked for a nine-page document that sets out why the organisation should worry about financial governance; it is just a given that it’s core to the organisation. So by asking people for a business case we’re almost kind of implying that it’s a ‘nice-to-have’ and it’s an option.”

Harvey adds: “The other thing we’ve done is to focus on managing diversity rather than practising inclusion. And when you manage diversity you get a whole lot of interventions and add-ons and all of those things that stand alone will have a short-term impact, but don’t actually have a sustainable impact because they require a lot of energy to go into them.”



### Reduced networking opportunity

Ainsley also points out that one of the outcomes of the pandemic – and the ensuing shift to home working – has been that more marginalised or junior parts of the workforce are finding fewer informal opportunities to engage and network. He argues that this limits the chances of career progression for, among others, minority ethnic workers.

He says: “The idea that you might say, bump into your boss’s boss in the lift and have a bit of a talk about how it’s going – that’s gone. The only interaction that you will now have with somebody will be formalised in a meeting, and generally have some sort of agenda or objective attached to it. So the idea that you can just engineer serendipity and serendipitous moments which break convention is harder when you work remotely.

“Typically, convention now means that minorities are underpaid and underpromoted. And if you have fewer moments to challenge that, then you default to the norm.”

CONTRIBUTORS:



**Ashleigh Ainsley**  
Co-founder,  
Colorintech



**Shereen Daniels**  
Managing Director,  
HR Rewired

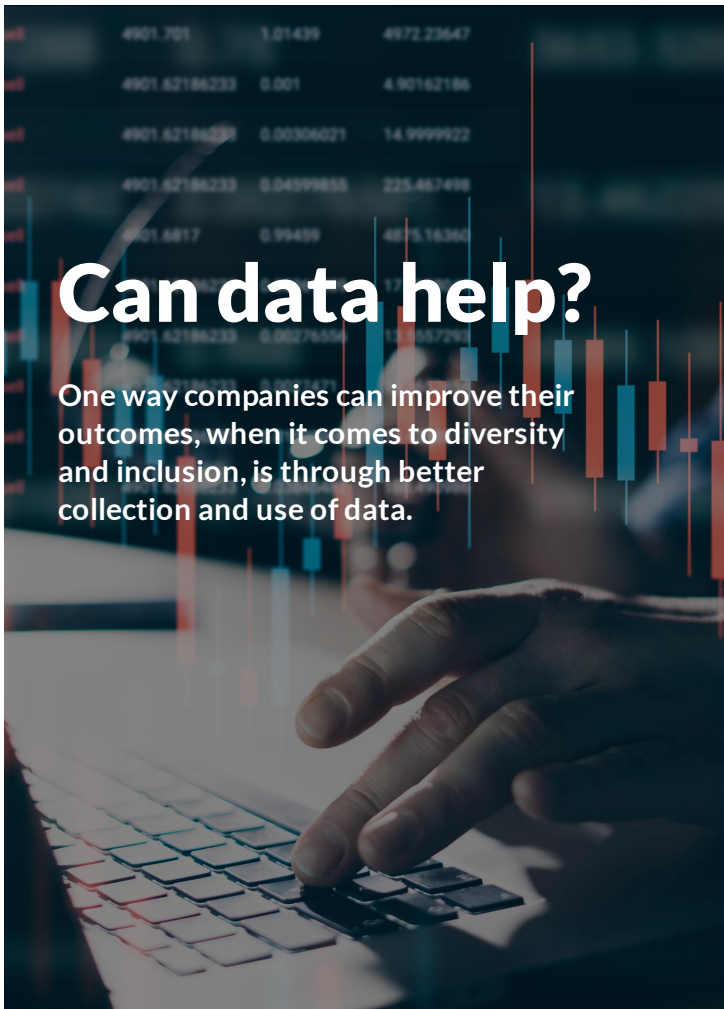


**Claire Harvey**  
Founder, Anatta, and  
Global Inclusion  
Lead, Vodafone

### SHARE THIS PAGE

CAMPBELL  
TICKELL





# Can data help?

One way companies can improve their outcomes, when it comes to diversity and inclusion, is through better collection and use of data.

Better collection and use of data is something which Ashleigh Ainsley's organisation, Colorintech, encourages in his clients, but which he says is often lacking – even among some of the bigger tech firms.

However, it is clear that HR and people teams are going to have to get used to installing and using workplace and people analytics tools more and more to manage a more distributed workforce.

## Dig into the data

Thomas Davies at Temporall says that organisations can and should use data in a much more profound way still to better understand their workforce.

“So many companies don't even know what they've already got,” he explains. “They're unable to utilise what's already theirs and I think that was our opportunity. Giving a company that ability to do real-time organisational intelligence can bring huge rewards for those people that understood how to do.”

This use of data to understand workers has huge real world applications in the new dispersed working environment. For example, Davies has clients who are making use of data analytics to assess employee isolation – a huge issue during the pandemic that seems, on the surface, to be far removed from data collection.

“So many companies don't even know what they've already got.”

“Within this highly distributed workforce and environment we're all working in, a company's ability to stay connected and to drive connectedness to every single employee is a huge challenge.” Davies says this is particularly the case when “people are doing an awful lot of meetings and they're working an awful lot of hours”.

## Working in isolation

According to Davies, the data increasingly shows the existence of groups and individuals that are becoming “isolated from the core business”, something which he believes is damaging for worker and employee alike.

He says: “That kind of intervention is now being driven by the CEO. That's not an HR discussion; that is a CEO imperative saying ‘I have a duty of care to my organisation to get better insight that allows me to prevent that kind of situation!’”

CONTRIBUTORS:



**Ashleigh Ainsley**  
Co-founder, Colorintech



**Thomas Davies**  
Founder, Temporall





# Top 10 recommendations for the new world of work

## 01

HR and people teams need to be brought into organisations' strategic thinking from the very start. Processes within that function need to be designed from the bottom up, so that they match the 'real world of work' in which employees now operate.

## 02

Organisations should be cautious about making major strategic decisions based purely on the past 12 months and the fallout from the pandemic. Think ahead five years to what the world of work will look like and how you want to position your organisation and the people within it. No, you won't have all the details but that long-term vision to aim for is very important.

## 03

The office is not dead but it will change. Use this as an opportunity to imagine new ways to use the same space to enhance employee engagement. Think of the areas where you want people to come together physically to collaborate and design spaces that support this.

## 04

Meanwhile, avoid creating a two-tier system between those who can and cannot work from home. Design a system of benefits that works for every employee's situation and does not discriminate, so that those who are unable to work from home are not 'punished' by spending more time commuting for example.

**“Employers need to rethink productivity goals to make them reflect a more blended approach to work.”**

## 05

The concept of surveillance-style management should be phased out and replaced by a system of mutual trust between manager and employee. But be careful to understand what systems and processes you are replacing to understand how the work is now getting done and what the signs are that your team and employee wellbeing is being impacted. If you're looking to introduce people or workplace analytical tools this should start with a conversation with those likely to be affected so they understand what is being done, why it's being done and how it will be used to support them do their jobs.

## 06

Training around how to spot burnout and how to manage wellbeing should become essential for all leaders and everyone within HR/people functions.

## 07

Employers need to rethink productivity goals to make them reflect a more blended approach to work. This does not mean lowering expectations, but, for example, making sure that targets are more flexible as a worker's personal circumstances change.

## 08

Salary will not be the most important thing when it comes to recruitment and retention, so organisations must be imaginative and flexible when designing reward packages to attract talent. Flexibility around where and when to work will become ever more desirable.

## 09

Diversity and inclusion should be seen as an output rather than an input. Organisations must invest time and resource to understand why they have diversity problems and only then decide how to fix them.

## 10

Data will become increasingly important to tackle these and many other problems at an organisational level. Data collection must be rigorous and data analysis should be front and centre of strategic planning. Start by collating what existing data your business already holds that can help you understand what is happening in the organisation .

---

SHARE THIS PAGE

CAMPBELL  
TICKELL



# ABOUT US

# CAMPBELL TICKELL

Campbell Tickell is a multi-disciplinary management consultancy focusing primarily on statutory and not-for-profit sectors.

Established for over 20 years, we have worked with more than 900 organisations throughout the UK, Ireland and beyond, with central and local government, housing associations, care providers, sports and leisure bodies, charities, and commercial organisations such as housebuilders and developers, contractors and legal firms.

Our services extend across: strategy and governance; finance and business planning; risk and assurance; regulation and troubleshooting; mergers and growth; business transformation; housing development and regeneration; human resources and recruitment.



**Disruptive  
Innovators  
Network**

We are the membership community for social housing organisations investing in innovation.

We have a passion for thinking and doing things differently.

By capturing the best insights and knowledge from all sectors, embracing disruption and innovation we inspire social housing leaders wanting to transform their organisation.

With a hands-on approach we explore different ways of working, test new and emerging technologies, fresh business models and understand how to deal effectively with disruption. We are about collaboration, sharing and learning together.

Find out what we are up to and by following us on [LinkedIn](#).

For more information about the Disruptive Innovators Network and our two specialist networks: Proptech (PIN) and RPA (IAN), please visit our [website](#).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All images credited to iStock by Getty Images. Special thanks to Gavriel Hollander and to all the organisations which contributed to this report:

