

‘A Strong Foundation For Your Working Life’.

Karbon Homes reward and benefits package





Message from Paul Fiddaman

I want Karbon Homes to be recognised as a great employer - an organisation that you feel proud to work for and others want to come and join.

I want everyone to feel fairly rewarded for the work they do, and to offer a competitive package of terms and conditions that enables us to retain and compete for the best talent in the region and beyond.

I want Karbon to reward people in a way that mirrors and supports our values, reflecting our ethos of a strong business head, and social heart.

A strong business head ...

From a business point of view, this reward package has been designed to be:

- Affordable and financially sustainable for the long term so we can remain financially strong in a challenging external environment
- Modern and progressive, by focusing benefits on business requirements and current thinking in the field of reward and recognition
- Flexible, so we have the capacity to adapt to changes in the external market and as our business evolves
- Efficient to administer to so we can provide great services to colleagues

And a strong social heart ...

Having a social heart is all about engagement. We made a commitment to understand the benefits our people value most. Firstly, colleagues were invited to take part in a Staff Benefits Survey. Then, a series of working groups were held to facilitate in depth discussions on the key topics that emerged.

Based on this insight, and using information gathered from external benchmarking, our reward package is designed to be:

- Attractive and competitively benchmarked against comparable roles and organisations, within our sector and the wider public and private sectors
- Family and lifestyle friendly, offering benefits that support a good work life balance and personal wellbeing
- Flexible, so you can tailor your reward package to suit your lifestyle and personal preferences

I hope you find this booklet helpful in understanding the Karbon Reward and Benefits package. As we are a relatively new organisation, you will see there are a few aspects we still need to develop and, I expect as we mature, we will continue to review and refresh our offer.

Paul Fiddaman,
Karbon Homes Group Chief Executive

Overview of the Karbon reward and benefits package

Our new reward and benefits package is made up of four elements

Wellbeing Package

Your Flexible Choices

Celebrating Success

A Great Core Package

The '**Great Core Package**' will be the foundation stone, containing your core contractual terms and conditions as a Karbon Homes employee.

Building on this, we will offer a **Wellbeing Package** covering a range of benefits designed to help you work at your best, some **Flexible Choices** so you can tailor your package to suit your lifestyle and personal preferences, and a recognition element called '**Celebrating Success**'.

A broad overview of the contents of all four elements is set out below.

A Great Core Package

This is the foundation of your reward and benefits package containing the core elements that affect your pay - including basic salary, as well as allowances for travel and, where relevant, standby and call out. It will also include the core elements that make up your contract of employment - such as pension, annual leave entitlement, your place and hours of work, maternity/paternity, sick pay and notice periods.

Wellbeing Package

This element of the reward and benefits package is made up of the additional benefits we offer to make your working life more comfortable and enjoyable, and to help you perform at your best. You'll see it covers benefits directly related to staying healthy, having quality personal and family time, and supporting you should you need an extra helping hand.

It also describes the support we want to offer for your personal and professional development - as growing, learning and developing to your full potential is an equally important part of overall wellbeing.

Your Flexible Choices

As unique individuals we all have different preferences and we understand that at different times in our lives, different things might be important. So the third element of the proposed Karbon reward and benefits package gives you the freedom to choose some additional benefits that best suit you and your personal circumstances.

Every year, starting from April 2019, we will give you a pot of £500, over and above your basic salary, which you decide how to use. You may, for example, choose to take the money as extra cash to top up your pay, or to buy extra benefits we will offer.

Celebrating Success

At Karbon Homes, it matters that your achievements are recognised and we celebrate our collective success. We believe this provides a great opportunity to demonstrate how we are living our values, making us stronger and more effective.

So the fourth and final element of the proposed Karbon reward package is made up of the different ways we will do this - from a simple 'Thank you' for a job well done, to offering some special rewards for outstanding individual contribution and exceptional team performance.

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1. Your Great Core Package

1.1 Hours of work

A consistent working week

A key strategic aim for Karbon Homes is to provide a modern, accessible and flexible service to our customers tailored around their needs and preferences.

To support this aim we have aligned the working week for all colleagues to 37 hours (pro rata for part time colleagues), which means trades and non-trades colleagues will be contracted for the same number of hours across the business.

Business opening hours and working patterns

At this stage, we are still considering our business opening hours and whether we offer extended hours supported by shift patterns.

The decision on business opening hours will be informed by the results of a comprehensive piece of research on customer preferences, which we are in the process of concluding and analysing. We are also keen to engage colleagues in different areas of the business, to explore how we might respond to the findings and to work with us in piloting different options.

Once we have concluded this work, we may review our opening hours and therefore move to operating shift patterns in some areas of the business. In the event that this does happen, we will consult appropriately with the groups of colleagues concerned before making any changes to contracted working hours and patterns.

1.2 Salary

A competitive spot salary

Our new salary structure is simple and consistent. All roles will attract a spot salary based on a 37 hour working week.

A spot salary approach is where there is a single salary for each role which changes in accordance to data from market reviews. Typically, reviews take place every three years and pay increases are awarded to keep pace with rates for similar jobs, or regional pay levels in the external labour market.

As we develop new roles at each stage of the restructure, Karbon salaries will be competitively benchmarked by our retained independent consultants, Campbell Tickell, to align them with the median market rate for 37 hour working week roles.

Using the new Karbon job descriptions, every role in the business will be benchmarked externally using a robust methodology that analyses the salaries for comparable roles – predominantly within the housing sector, and also other relevant organisations in the private and public sector for roles that are not sector-specific.

How are salaries benchmarked?

Campbell Tickell are a well-established and leading consultancy within our sector who help a number of housing providers (and organisations in other related fields) with all aspects of pay and reward.

Pay benchmarking is the means by which an organisation explores the responsibility of a role and compares it to similar roles in external organisations to determine the market rate of pay for that post.

There are a range of variables that are taken into account and principles that are applied to ensure that the methodology and subsequent results are sound, may include:

- The number of housing units the post is responsible for
- The number of staff in direct and/or indirect line management
- Whether those staff are dispersed across more than one, or several locations
- The span of geographical responsibility
- The overall level and scope of the role
- The level of training and qualifications required

Each role will be benchmarked using the same approach, including Executive Director roles. For each post, a minimum of fifteen similar roles are gathered. In some cases Campbell Tickell will select roles from within the housing sector, and in some cases may also compare against roles from different sectors, depending on where external recruits are likely to come from. This means for some roles, it might be appropriate to include sample data from organisations in other commercial sectors, as well as housing.

Campbell Tickell have a salaries database containing data on 19,000+ roles covering every level, in every function across housing and related sectors.

Typically they look at data from the last two years from the salaries database, and where necessary apply any annual pay awards to ensure that the data they are using is up to date.

Ensuring our salaries remain competitive over time

To ensure our salaries remain competitive we are committed to:

- An annual cost of living review taking account of rates of inflation and pay awards within our sector, and our financial position. Any pay award that is made will be applied annually from 1st April
- A three-year external benchmark review, whereby we will invite independent external consultants to carry out a market testing exercise to make sure we continue to track the market median for each role in the business. The purpose of re-benchmarking will be to identify any roles that have changed significantly in the external market so we can make any necessary adjustments.

Equally, it is important to us that we reassure colleagues about the potential for any salary decreases, and are able to effectively control our salary costs and minimise changes to payroll. We have therefore set a generous tolerance level of £500 or 1% of salary to protect against fluctuations in the market, which means we will only adjust the salary for a role as a result of the three year re-benchmarking if it has increased or decreased by more than £500 or 1% of salary – whichever is the highest. In the event that the salary decreases more than this amount, we will offer one year pay protection at 100%, which is common practice within our sector and beyond.

Ensuring equal pay

In conjunction with the three-year external benchmark review, we will carry out an equal pay audit in order to ensure good practice in paying men and women fairly for work of equal value.

Overtime pay

Depending on the role you do in Karbon, there may be occasions when you are asked to do some overtime to help get through a particularly busy period.

Overtime will normally only be payable when hours worked are in excess of your weekly working hours and, where applicable, outside the parameters of the flexi time scheme. Overtime rates will normally be based on each individual's basic hourly rate, including any current arrangements for salary protection. Overtime rates will be paid at single time up to 37 hours per week then at time and a half, with the exception of Sundays and bank holidays which will be paid at double time.

We will be reviewing our arrangements for trades colleagues separately as part of the restructure of Property Services.

1.3 Pension

Investing in your future

We are all living longer these days so having the means to enjoy our later years when we are older and (hopefully) wiser, is more important than ever. Karbon Homes is committed to offering excellent pension provision for all colleagues.

Colleagues who join Karbon Homes following our legal amalgamation on 1st April 2017 can join the SHPS 1/60th Career Average pension (known as CARE) which is a defined benefit pension scheme. Karbon contributes 8.35% of an employee's salary into the scheme.

New colleagues who decide not to join the SHPS CARE Scheme will be auto-enrolled into the SHPS Defined Contribution Scheme if eligible. Karbon Homes will contribute 3% of an individual's salary into the scheme (from 1st April 2018).

In total, Karbon Homes currently invests £3.4 million into pensions every year, which is a substantial commitment. Like all businesses, pension arrangements is something we must keep under review in future years due to the significant financial implications and as legislation and regulation changes.

Should any changes be proposed in the future, we are committed to consulting fully with colleagues.

1.4 Place of work

Being agile

We hear this word a lot these days, and for good reason. Technology is rapidly changing and at Karbon we have a big ambition to make our services more accessible to customers – including a lot more access online.

We also have a large geographical area to cover and while we will continue to have offices across the region, we expect increasing numbers of colleagues to work remotely, and collaborate using Skype and video conferencing.

This means, over time, we will move to more hot-desking arrangements and other flexible ways of working. Therefore, we will be considering where our offices are located and accommodation arrangements.

We are not yet in a position to make big strategic decisions on office accommodation as these will be influenced by a number of factors:

- The capacity we are able to create through remodelling existing office accommodation
- How our customer contact centre, or centres, will operate in the future
- Our ICT strategy for the business, including business continuity arrangements in the event of a major incident
- Opportunities and costs if we were to sell/sublet some of our existing office accommodation and buy new premises
- Analysis of local markets to understand recruitment issues that may affect our ability to retain and attract people with the right skills and experience

So for now, we will aim to minimise making changes to colleagues' contractual office bases, but expect people to work flexibly across the business to meet colleagues' and customers' requirements and to deliver a great service as appropriate to their role.

Should any widespread changes be proposed in the future, we are committed to consulting fully with colleagues.

Excess travel

In the event that your contractual office base is further away than your existing one, you will be able to claim excess mileage for one year to help you adjust to your new travel and working arrangements. Payments will be subject to the usual tax deductions.

This will apply in cases where you have been matched or ring fenced to a role, or in the event you are redeployed into an agreed suitable alternative post. In the event that you choose to apply for a role – maybe as a promotion, or a sideways move – you will not be able to claim excess mileage.

1.5 Your journey to work and business mileage

We work across a large geographical area and want to minimise our impact on the environment by encouraging sustainable travel, and effective journey planning and scheduling of appointments. At the same time, we also want to make sure we remain a strongly customer facing organisation, connected to the local communities we serve.

Roles that incur high mileage

To support colleagues whose roles require them to undertake a significant amount of business miles we will offer a Karbon Car Payment of £1,850 per year (pro rata for part time roles).

The qualifying criteria is that your role requires you to travel significantly and on a regular basis - a minimum of 3,000 miles per year (pro rata for part time roles), excluding your commute to and from work.

This means the payment will apply to roles that are required to be highly visible across the whole business, and/or work across a large geographical patch and regularly travel in order to visit customers/key stakeholders.

If your role qualifies for the Karbon Car Payment you will also receive:

- 35p per mile up to 9,999 miles
- 20p per mile for 10,000 and over

Added together with the Karbon Car Payment, this means you will receive a mileage rate that is significantly more generous than the HMRC approved rates. You will also have the option of claiming tax back from HMRC on your business mileage.

We will periodically review the Karbon Car Payment in terms of the roles that qualify, to ensure that the allocation of the payment reflects new geography and patch sizes etc.

From 1st April 2019 the Karbon Car Payment will also be reviewed in line with any cost of living pay award that is made.

Roles that incur low to medium mileage

Colleagues whose roles do not require them to carry out significant mileage (ie. less than 3,000 miles) will be able to claim the HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance of 45p per mile, but will not receive the Karbon Car Payment.

According to HMRC this rate covers fuel costs, the cost of business insurance, depreciation and wear and tear while you are using your car for work purposes. After 10,000 miles the rate drops to 25p per mile

All colleagues who wish to claim mileage must have business use insurance, the cost of which is included in the pence per mile rate, as explained above.

Cycle to work scheme

We all know the commute to work can be challenging, so you might like to find an alternative to driving by taking advantage of our Cycle To Work scheme.

This is a salary sacrifice benefit which helps you to save tax whilst also helping to reduce air pollution and improve your health and fitness.

To incentivise this mode of transport, you can claim 20p per mile for your commute to and from work if you cycle. You can also hire bikes and cycling equipment worth from £250 to £1,000 over an agreed period, with the opportunity to purchase the goods at the end.

Greener travel

We are committed to extending the ways in which we can minimise our impact on the environment through options such as pool cars, increasing the number of electric charging points and offering subsidised passes for public transport. We will be exploring the opportunities and practical implications of these during the course of 2018 to see what may be feasible.

Car sharing

To help reduce our impact on the environment and relieve pressure on car parking spaces, we will offer an additional 5p per mile to colleagues who car share. Colleagues will be able to claim this additional payment through expenses. Please note, it is important that you check your insurance covers you for carrying passengers as not all companies include this under business use.

1.6 Time off

Annual leave

We are committed to encouraging a healthy work-life balance at Karbon Homes and we know that annual leave entitlement is one of the most highly valued aspects of the reward package.¹

We offer a generous, enhanced scheme to ensure all colleagues can perform at their best by regularly taking time to recharge their batteries, and spending time with friends and family.

All new starters to Karbon Homes receive 26 days. We will then increase holiday entitlement as your service increases, so colleagues will reach the maximum allowance after 3 years, as follows:

27 days after 1 year of service

29 days after 2 years of service

31 days after 3 years of service

Annual leave entitlement will run from 1st April to 31st March annually.

Bank holidays

In addition to annual leave entitlement, all colleagues will receive eight bank holidays each year, pro rata for part time roles.

Carrying over leave

All colleagues will be able to carry over the equivalent of one week's annual leave, subject to their line manager's approval.

Christmas

All colleagues (other than those doing emergency on-call) will be required to use some of their leave entitlement to take time off over Christmas for any days when our offices are closed that are not designated as bank holidays, and which colleagues would have usually worked.

Our new approach will take effect from December 2018.

We are keeping an open mind about our arrangements for office opening over the Christmas and New Year period which may evolve over time, informed by customer feedback and insight. We will discuss any proposed changes with you in advance.

Buying and selling leave

To provide additional flexibility, we are proposing to offer the option to buy or sell annual leave so you can boost your entitlement, or avoid losing days that you may not take.

Under the scheme there will be two buy and sell 'windows' in March and September and you will be able to buy or sell up to one additional week's leave, pro rata for part time colleagues, in any one year. We expect the new buy and sell leave scheme to start from April 2019.

1.7 Working flexibly

Flexible working

We know that getting your work-life balance right is important and we're proud to be able to support flexible working. After a qualifying period, we will offer all colleagues the opportunity to request to work flexibly. We want to encourage a strong work and family partnership and try to be as flexible as possible, so we will take all requests seriously and give them the consideration they deserve.

Flexi time

We will continue to operate a Flexi Time Scheme to provide additional flexibility for colleagues to manage their time, balanced against the needs of the business and providing cover for key services. This benefit will be available to the vast majority of Karbon colleagues.

Special arrangements for some colleagues will be as follows:

- Due to the nature of the work carried out by our trades colleagues, we are looking at working patterns that could aid flexibility and enhance our customer service offer.
- Colleagues who work in our customer contact centres will have a bespoke arrangement that is suited to the particular demands of their service area.
- Executive Directors, Directors and Assistant Directors will not take part in the scheme.

The key aspects of the proposed Karbon Flexi Scheme are as follows:

- Bandwidth 7:30am to 7:00pm
- No core hours
- Ability to take up to 13 days per year in half of full day blocks, with a maximum of two days in any four week period
- Credit of 15 hours and debit of 10 hours at the end of a four week period
- Minimum 4.5 hour day

The spirit of the Karbon flexi-time scheme is to provide 'give and take'. This means flexi leave should be seen not as pre-determined entitlement, but as a way of working that enables colleagues to manage their work-life balance and for the business to respond to specific work demands.

¹ Annual leave entitlement was the 5th highest valued benefit in the Staff Benefits Survey

1.8 Under the weather

Sick pay

Regardless of how fit and healthy you are, there may be times when you're not well enough to come to work. We offer a generous and competitive enhanced occupational sick pay scheme that provides financial support during absences from the business.

Under our scheme your cover steadily increases year on year according to your length of service, up to a maximum of six months full pay and six months half pay after five or more years, as follows:

- Probationary period = Statutory Sick Pay only
- 7 months to 1 year = 1 month full and 1 month half pay
- 2nd year = 2 months full and 2 months half pay
- 3rd year = 4 months full and 4 months half pay
- 4th year = 5 months full and 5 months half pay
- 5th year = 6 month full and 6 month half pay

Time off for hospital appointments

Karbon Homes recognises that appointments set by hospitals and clinics aren't always easy to change. For appointments you have no control over, paid time off can be taken during the working day.

Colleagues will be required to provide their appointment letter to their line manager who will authorise an appropriate length of time away from work.

Occupational health

We have contracts with external occupational health providers who are here to provide support in the event that you are unwell for a prolonged period of time.

Through the Karbon Homes People and Organisation Development Team, our occupational health service will offer health assessments and advice, so we can work together to support you back to health and fitness in the best way possible. They will also provide occupational health assessments such as Hepatitis B etc.

1.9 Moving in, and moving on

Probation period

When you join Karbon Homes as a new starter, regardless of your role, you will have an initial six month probation period.

This is our time to really get to know one another – so you can feel confident you have made the right decision to come on board, and we can feel confident you are the right person to join our team.

Notice periods

At some point in your career with us, inevitably it will be time to go.

This may be when you are ready to retire and want to move in to a new phase of your life, or when an exciting opportunity has come your way that is simply too good to miss, or it might be as a result of changes to the way we deliver our services.

As your employer, we will provide notice of one week if you are still in your probationary period. After you have successfully completed probation, we will provide you with one month's notice, or one week for each year of your continuous service with Karbon - up to a maximum of 12 weeks (whichever is longer).

As our employee, we will ask you to provide the following on completion of your probationary period to allow us sufficient time to arrange for handover and to make arrangements for recruiting to your post:

- 24 weeks if you are an Executive Director or Director
- 12 weeks if you are an Assistant Director
- 8 weeks if you are a Manager or you have a specialist role
- 4 weeks for all other roles

In the unusual event that a colleague hands their notice in during their probationary period, we will agree a reasonable notice period on a case by case basis.

Retirement workshop

Taking retirement is a big decision and one that impacts on many areas of your life. To support colleagues at this stage in their lives we will pay for a one day pre-retirement workshop in partnership with an external provider.

The workshop will cover all the key lifestyle aspects of retirement - from health and leisure, to work and relationships. A key aim is to support people practically and emotionally in planning ahead and preparing for this major life transition, so they can recognise the potential issues and opportunities and make retirement work for them.

1.10 Life changes

Maternity and adoption pay

As a family friendly organisation, we want to support colleagues who decide to extend their family. We offer an attractive, enhanced scheme as follows:

Weeks 1 to 6: Full pay, inclusive of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

Weeks 7 to 22: Half pay, plus SMP

Weeks 23 to 39: SMP only

Weeks 40 to 52: Unpaid

Paternity leave and fertility treatment

For colleagues who wish to take paternity leave we offer three weeks paid paternity leave. We also offer up to five paid days for fertility treatment.

Busy Bees Childcare Vouchers

We offer the childcare voucher scheme at Busy Bees Benefits which is fully endorsed by the HMRC and is designed to help working parents with the cost of their childcare.

The vouchers (funds) can be used to pay for a variety of registered childcare - including nurseries, nannies, after school activities, summer camps, au pairs, playgroups, holiday clubs and childcare provided by schools (breakfast clubs etc.).

Karbon colleagues who are parents, can benefit from significant tax and NI savings of up to £933 a year using Childcare Vouchers, and up to double the amount if both parents are part of a registered Childcare Vouchers scheme.

The scheme is offered as a benefit via a salary sacrifice arrangement, where you will opt to exchange part of your monthly salary in return for the vouchers for a period of 12 months. You will save tax and National Insurance Contributions on the amount selected (up to your tax band limit).

In addition to this, if you use a Busy Bees Nursery, you are entitled to an extra 5% discount on their fees.

The vouchers are valid for children up to the age of 15 or 16 if they are registered with a disability.

A new Government scheme will be available later this year. More information can be found here: www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/tax-freechildcare

If you pay for childcare you should explore both the Busy Bees Childcare Vouchers scheme and the Government scheme, so you can establish which is the most financially beneficial for your personal circumstances.

2. Your Wellbeing Package

2.1 Staying healthy

Being healthy and staying active helps build a strong physical and mental foundation, so we can be resilient and get the most out of life. At Karbon Homes we want to help you be proactive in taking care of yourself and our wellbeing benefits are designed to do just that.

This is why we have made an ongoing commitment to be part of Better Health At Work, a national award scheme run by the NHS that promotes health and wellbeing in the workplace and wider community.

Cash health plan

We will enrol all colleagues in the BHSF Cash Health Plan bronze level, on successful completion of their probationary period.

The cash plan offers cover that gives money back on a range of everyday healthcare bills and consultations / scans - including those from dentists, opticians, physiotherapists, osteopaths, chiropractors, acupuncturists and homeopaths. The amounts you can claim will vary according to the nature of the treatment.

The plan also offers access to corporate gym membership rates and an employee assistance scheme providing 24/7 counselling services and access to a GP helpline.

Colleagues will also have the option to include family members on the cash health plan, if they wish to pay the additional cost.

Please note the plan does not cover day case surgery, or a stay in hospital.

Free fruit and refreshments

We don't believe in charging colleagues for tea and coffee. We want everyone to be able to enjoy a hassle-free cuppa so we provide free tea, coffee and water coolers at all our office locations.

We also like to encourage healthy eating with a weekly delivery of fresh fruit to our offices.

Eye care

Free eye tests are available with Vision Express and we will provide up to £45 towards the cost of glasses or lenses if you need them for working with a screen.

If you wish to use a different optician, we will refund the cost of a standard eye test but will be unable to off-set the cost of glasses or lenses with any other optician.

Wellbeing sessions

Throughout the year you will be invited to various events and activities to promote wellbeing in the workplace. These could include things like massage sessions, health MOTs, and campaigns around different health issues.

2.2 Special occasions

As well as taking care of mind and body, wellbeing is also about nurturing our spirit - by having fun, relaxing, and taking time out to mark special occasions. Here are some ways we want to help you celebrate and enjoy the good times.

Birthday leave

At Karbon we want to help you celebrate your birthday with a little gift from us. Each year we will give you an extra day of paid leave on your special day to enjoy some 'me time', or spend time with family and friends. If your birthday falls on a non-working day or a weekend, don't worry, you will be able to talk to your line manager about an alternative arrangement close to the date.

Christmas festivities

We also want to help you celebrate at Christmas. For example, we currently invest in tickets for a local show or event which we make available to colleagues at a discounted rate, giving you an opportunity to enjoy a festive treat with family and friends.

Making a new home

Karbon Homes is all about providing foundations, about the importance a home has in providing a base for people to lead successful lives.

If you are moving into a new home, we want to mark this important moment in your life by giving you a paid day's leave.

This day will be available as one day in every two years (we don't expect most people will move more frequently than this!). You can use your extra day to unpack boxes, transfer your utilities, or maybe just to enjoy a cuppa and make yourself at home.

2.3 Extra support when you need it

We're all human and no matter how strong or resilient we may be, there are times when we may need an extra helping hand. At these moments here are some of the practical things we will do to support you.

Stuck not sick

Sometimes boilers break down, and people or things you were relying on fall through and you find yourself stuck. You are not sick, but need some time at short notice to organise a repair, or make alternative arrangements.

If you find yourself in this situation and don't have any flexi time or annual leave you can use, we will offer up to three emergency unpaid 'Stuck not sick' days each year.

So, if and when you find yourself in this kind of situation, you know you will be able to ask to take the time off and have one less thing to worry about!

Please note, this is in addition to statutory dependents leave (unpaid).

Compassionate leave

We want to support you during the difficult times, such as the loss of a loved one, by giving you time out to attend to making the necessary arrangements, or to just be with friends and family. We will provide up to five days paid bereavement leave for immediate family, and up three days for close family and friends.

Directors and Assistant Directors also have discretion to offer up to five paid days additional compassionate leave in exceptional circumstances

Special leave

If required, we will arrange for you to have paid time off if you are called to jury service, duties relating to the armed forces or public office.

Counselling service

We retain the services of independent, qualified and experienced counsellors and will arrange to pay for a series of up to six confidential counselling sessions on a referral basis via our People and Organisation Development Team.

The counselling service can help in situations such as ...

- Coming to terms with a bereavement
- Recovering from the impact of a serious illness or injury
- The impact of significant life events
- Dealing with stress or anxiety
- Struggling with phobias

Low interest loans

Low interest loans will be available through a credit union.

A credit union is a financial and co-operative organisation owned and run by its members that encourages its members to borrow and save responsibly. They provide an alternative service to banks, building societies and high-interest loan providers. They encourage you to save what you can and borrow only what you can afford to repay.

As a member of a credit union you can benefit from:

- Easy, convenient and secure ways to save
- Access to loans you can afford to repay through flexible payment plans
- Access to guidance and support to help you take control of your money

Your savings and loan repayments can be paid directly from payroll.

2.4 Personal and professional development

So far we have talked about the wellbeing benefits we will offer associated with having a strong mental and physical foundation for life. We also think of investing in your continued personal and professional development as another aspect of wellbeing, focused on the possibilities and opportunities for you to grow and fulfil your potential, which is why we want to offer these additional benefits.

Annual professional subscription

At Karbon Homes we employ almost 800 people in many different disciplines. We want to retain and attract talented, capable people who are professionals in their own right and support them in keeping up to date with the latest developments and thinking in their field.

We will therefore offer to pay a maximum of one annual professional subscription per year for everyone at Karbon Homes, providing it is related to their job role. This payment will be for fees to retain membership and accredited status with a professional body, such as the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH), Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) etc

Career development

As we move forward into our second year as Karbon Homes we will be investing in career development programmes that provide opportunities for colleagues across the business to develop their leadership skills, including individuals interested in stepping into a managerial role in the future.

We will also be seeking to extend our apprentice programmes and continuing to offer work placements throughout the year.

Personal development

In addition to supporting career progression, we will run ongoing learning and development programmes to make sure colleagues have up to date knowledge of new legislation and technical developments, as well as opportunities to develop their skills and improve their self-awareness.

Volunteering

Karbon Homes will grant colleagues up to the equivalent of two fifths of normal weekly working hours per financial year to undertake approved Community Investment volunteering activities. For example, if you are in a full time 37 hour per week role, you will be able to take two paid days each year to undertake this sort of activity.

The volunteer hours can be taken as a whole block of time or alternatively can be spread across a period of time.

Career breaks

Career breaks (also sometimes called sabbaticals) enhance wellbeing by providing time off to look after dependents, go travelling, or undertake an extended period of volunteering or study.

On reaching your five years (continuous service) anniversary with Karbon Homes, we are proposing that all colleagues will have the opportunity to apply for a career break of up to 12 months.

Career breaks will be unpaid, but will provide the opportunity to take time out and retain your continuous service with Karbon Homes.

We will develop a new policy on this for consultation in due course.

3. Your Flexible Choices

3.1 Your Flexible Pot

We all have different preferences, and at different times in our lives our priorities can change. So this third element of the Karbon reward package is designed to give you the freedom to choose some additional benefits that best suit you and your personal circumstances.

Every year (from April 2019), we will give you a pot of £500 in addition to your basic salary, which you decide how to use.

Every year, you will be able to decide which combination will work best for you. You may wish to take the money as extra cash, or buy some extra benefits from the choices set out below.

If you choose to take cash, your £500 will be subject to normal tax and NI deductions. If you opt for additional benefits, these will be treated as benefits in kind.

To qualify for the £500 pot you must be employed by Karbon Homes, so this will include all permanent colleagues, as well as those on fixed term contracts. It will not apply to agency temps. The Flexible Pot will be available to eligible colleagues on successful completion of their probationary period.

Upgrade your Health Cash Plan

As part of your Wellbeing Package Karbon Homes will provide bronze level cover with BHSF. BHSF also offer Silver and Gold level cover at affordable prices that give you access to a greater range of benefits and cover, which you will be able to purchase with your Flexible Pot.

You may also choose to use your Flexible Pot to pay for adding family members onto your cash health plan.

Private medical insurance

Private Medical insurance (PMI) is a great compliment to having a health cash plan to give you that extra peace of mind.

PMI is available through Vitality who offer comprehensive health cover which includes private care with private GP video consultations within 48 hours, a choice of consultants, and insurance cover for fees relating to hospital stays, consultant fees, diagnostic tests and out-patient treatment.

Vitality also offer a range of benefits - including cinema tickets, discounts on Fitbits and British Airways flights, plus many more. To unlock these benefits you are encouraged to invest in your own wellbeing and points make prizes, so the more proactive you become the more discount and benefits you receive.

Colleagues who join Vitality will also be able to add their children and family members onto the scheme by paying an additional charge.

Buy additional annual leave

In the Great Core Package, we offer the opportunity to buy and sell annual leave, so you may decide to use your Flexible Pot to put towards the cost of buying additional days if you wish to take an extended holiday, or just to add onto your basic entitlement.

The maximum amount you can buy or sell is one week's leave (based on your normal working week). The cost of a day's leave will be based on your annual salary. We expect the new buy and sell leave scheme to be available from April 2019.

Take as extra cash

It may suit you best to take your £500 as cash to pay for a one-off purchase or contribute to a special holiday or occasion.

If you are in receipt of benefits of any kind and decide to take this option, please explore how this might affect your benefits in the first instance.

Charitable giving

If you take the cash option, you will be able to choose to do whatever you want with the amount you receive after normal deductions.

We will be exploring setting up a charitable giving scheme later this year to provide an option for colleagues to use all, or part of their £500, to support causes dear to their heart.

Shopping discounts

To give you access to some of the benefits available, we will use an online portal provided by 'You At Work' that all Karbon colleagues will have access to.

'You At Work' will also give you access to shopping discounts. For example, you can get a Tesco reloadable gift card which saves you around £250 per year on shopping.

This gives you another option to choose from in how you decide to use your £500 Flexible Pot.

More choices

Over time, we will be exploring more options that we can make available for you to choose from

4. Celebrating Success

4.1 Your Karbon Homes anniversary

We value commitment and want to celebrate your milestone anniversaries during your career with us. In true Karbon style, we therefore want to make a fuss of you each time you reach the following years of continuous service:

5 years – Carbon

We like to think of your first five years at Karbon Homes as your formative years, the time when all the fundamental elements come together as you build up a base of knowledge and experience and set up relationships across the business that create a strong foundation for your future success. We will call this your Carbon Anniversary, after the element that is fundamental for all life and inspired our name.

10 years – Graphite

Graphite is formed from carbon atoms in layers. After ten years in the business we expect you will have built up many layers of experience that add real value to Karbon Homes and our customers. This is when we will celebrate your Graphite Anniversary.

15 years – Glass

After fifteen years of service we expect your skills, knowledge and experience will be really crystallising. This is when we will celebrate your Glass Anniversary.

20 years – Coal

By the time you reach twenty years of service, you will have developed a deep, rich seam of knowledge and experience to draw upon. This is when we will celebrate your Coal Anniversary

30 years – Quartz

Quartz is a mineral made up of many complex atoms and many of them are semi-precious gemstones. After thirty years of service, we like to think that you will have formed into a Karbon Homes gem.

40 years – Diamond

Diamonds, as you know, are very precious, very beautiful, and formed from carbon under great pressure. It's probably fair to say at this point, if you have been on the journey with us for forty years, you will have developed many facets throughout periods of growth and change, and we would like to celebrate your resilience and the value you add to Karbon Homes, with a Diamond anniversary.

During 2018 we will be inviting colleagues from across the business to get involved in discussing and exploring how we celebrate each anniversary.

4.2 Celebrating 'Team Karbon' performance

Every single person in Karbon Homes contributes to the whole, as part of one big team. So regardless of what role you have, you will be helping to provide people with the foundations they need to build a better life.

We are interested in developing a scheme that recognises the excellent contribution people collectively make to our business strategy, achievements and KPIs as one big team. At this stage it is too early to say what the recognition scheme could include as this would be something very innovative within our sector.

During 2018 we will be inviting colleagues from across the business to get involved in discussing and exploring how we might do this in a meaningful and practical way.

4.3 Celebrating individual performance

In addition to collective achievement, we are interested in recognising individual contribution.

We know one of the most powerful and appreciated ways to recognise individual contributions is a simple 'Thank you' for a job well done. We are also keen to recognise colleagues who role model our values.

At this stage we envisage Karbon recognition schemes will include:

- A 'Thank you' scheme
- 'Living The Values' awards
- A 'Passion And Potential' scheme for outstanding contribution

During 2018 we will be inviting colleagues from across the business to get involved in gathering ideas, and exploring how we bring them to life in practice.



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'A Strong Foundation For Your Working Life'