



STAFF CHECK-IN POLICY

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1. Introduction

ng homes values its staff and wants them to be happy and proud to work for the Association. Staff who feel this way are more motivated, interested and likely to take responsibility and share ownership for contributing to ng homes' aims and objectives and corporate and social responsibilities.

The Association has developed a new approach called staff 'Check-in' as a replacement for the previous staff appraisal policy. For the purposes of this policy and in practice, ng homes will refer to 'appraisals' as a staff 'Check-in', to reflect the change and purpose of our continuous approach to evaluating performance and develop strong working relationships between managers and staff through regular open two-way dialogue.

ng homes is therefore committed to engaging staff and involving them in decision making. We aim to create a culture in which the Association's values are embedded. The values are as follows:

- We are a quality organisation delivering excellence
- We act with integrity
- We are friendly and treat people with respect
- We are customer focused and put the customer first
- We are trusted and trusting
- We are accountable

By ensuring the values are adhered to, the following behaviours should be encouraged, recognised, developed and rewarded:

- Demonstrating initiative for improving the service to customers, or internal processes.
- Taking responsibility for identifying and resolving problems and issues, which prevent the Association from delivering good service to customers or to each other.
- Demonstrating teamwork – within and across teams – through working together and supporting the overall goals of the Association.
- Delivering excellent customer service – through responding promptly and courteously to internal and external customer requests, anticipating and exceeding customer's expectations.
- Continuously seeking improvement to what we do.

Staff have been consulted and have been actively involved in the development and introduction of the Check-in process.

2. Purpose

The main purpose of Check-in is to assist with staff personal development, build strong working relationships, improve performance and achieve ng homes' objectives, through the maximisation of individual staff and team potential. Check-in will support staff growth and development and enable the Association to harness the skills and talents of all our people.

Check-in will also focus on supporting staff health and wellbeing.

It is also recognised that a review of individual and team achievements can improve performance through:

- Clarification of the employee's job function and role in the team
- Reinforcing a positive and professional attitude to our work
- Identification of training needs
- Identification of support needs
- Giving future direction to staff through the identification of agreed objectives
- Building strong relationships between the staff member and manager
- Taking time out formally to let staff know how valuable they are to the Association
- Providing an opportunity for staff to contribute to the Association's development

The staff member and their manager will agree how the staff member will be able to contribute to the continuous improvement of the Association and the services provided over the coming year. They will also agree what support is required from managers. Training/support will be provided/offered to enable staff to perform their job to the best of their ability.

These agreed objectives will be reviewed throughout the year via a 'continuous feedback' approach. The process will be flexible, both in terms of timing and approach, to allow the member of staff and their manager to be empowered to fully participate in these ongoing conversations. The staff member and manager will therefore meet as frequently as required for Check-ins, but as a minimum, this should take place on a quarterly basis.

3. Principles

The aim of the Check-in is to achieve mutual assessment and agreement on the staff member's contribution, targets, training and development needs as a continuous process. This will be achieved through a focus on three key elements:



Health and Wellbeing

The Check-in will place an emphasis on discussions surrounding general mental and physical health and wellbeing and allow staff to view this, alongside performance related matters, as an equally important objective for discussion. Therefore, the following will feature in all staff Check-ins as a mandatory objective: 'to discuss health and wellbeing in my role'.

In turn, the Check-in will enable any matters arising to be discussed in an open, non-judgemental, and confidential manner and facilitate the right support to be arranged where appropriate. The discussion for this objective can range from matters such as workload, general support, working environment, teamwork, organisational culture and general health (physical and mental).

The objective of the Check-in is to achieve a mutual assessment of performance and mutual agreement on the way forward and, in turn, to build strong relationships between staff and

managers. The aim is to reach a consensus in all areas during the Check-in. Best results will be achieved if the member of staff regularly details or reflects on their progress, achievements, and thoughts ahead of their Check-in. Staff are therefore given an opportunity to note what they feel they have achieved towards their objectives and where they may need some further training and/or direction. This will form the basis of the Check-in discussions. Staff will have the option to document any progress in between Check-ins in their Check-in Progress Log (see Appendix One) however this element is not compulsory.

The initial Check-in will normally take place in quarter one (April to June) each year or within the first three months of employment for any new starts. This will allow objectives and training and development aspirations to be established. The period of review will be no longer than a year and Check-ins will be held as frequently as required, dependent on individual needs, but as a minimum on a quarterly basis.

Managers will not view Check-ins as a mechanism to admonish or reward staff.

Prior to any Check-in, the staff member and their manager will have taken enough time to prepare and review any updates. The Check-in should take place somewhere free from interruptions, relaxed and informal to encourage frank and open discussions (in person or remotely).

The Check-in will assess achievements and look at the staff member's contribution from an overall perspective as well as the day-to-day details. Each Check-in will allow the opportunity for objectives and training needs to be adapted, added, or removed as applicable.

Any documentation relating to the Check-in will be treated confidentially. Check-in information will therefore be kept securely on the Association's HR system (CIPHR) and only the member of staff, their manager and HR will have access (in the case of the CEO, the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson as the appraisers will have access). When a member of staff leaves our employment, personal information will be destroyed in line with retention periods.

4. Process

4.1 Key Considerations for Check-ins

Check-ins will be effective if staff and their manager are committed to the following principles:

- Clear commitment by both parties

- Knowledge and understanding of the process
- A positive and trusting climate of relationships
- A supportive approach
- Clear explanation and agreement of objectives
- High level of participation
- A joint problem-solving approach
- Effective follow up

All staff will take part in Check-ins, the manager participating must have direct influence over the staff member's daily duties and be capable of implementing most recommendations arising from the process. Where possible the direct line manager will be the individual supporting at the Check-in. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson carry out the CEO's Check-in, supported by an external consultant where required. The CEO's Check-in may be recorded in an alternative format, for example a paper copy for ease of access.

Where a line manager feels a member of staff's contribution has been particularly exceptional, they will take responsibility for highlighting this to the appropriate Director.

The process for recording Check-ins will be accessible to all staff (see Appendix Two) and will be recorded in the HR system. At the heart of the Check-in however is the quality and frequency of the discussions, goal setting, and focus on personal/professional development and the system enables a means of documenting a summary of these conversations.

4.2 First Check-in

The first Check-in of the year will take place in quarter one (April to June) and can be carried out in person or remotely. The staff member will be given sufficient notice of the date of the first Check-in and further Check-ins will be agreed and diarised at the end of each Check-in thereafter. Staff will be given sufficient time during working hours to prepare for their planned Check-in and will use their day to day tasks to contribute towards achieving their objectives and development goals.

The member of staff and manager will meet and agree on key objectives which relate to the requirements of their role (the number of agreed objectives may vary, however 3-5 would be reasonable). Job descriptions can be utilised at Check-ins as they set out the key roles and responsibilities of each post which in turn can be shaped into objectives. This information will then be input to the HR system ensuring that the 'objective raised date', 'objective target date' and

'objective description' are entered. Managers will then add any comments or detail any agreements that were made in relation to each objective.

The member of staff and manager will discuss and devise any training and development needs, ensuring that 'description', 'identified', 'target date' and 'notes' categories are completed to give full details of the development need.

The member of staff and manager will diarise their next Check-in, which as a minimum will take place each quarter.

4.3 Objectives

Objectives will be specific to each member of staff and their current priorities. Objectives may relate to a specific element of the staff member's role which they want to focus on developing; can be in line with a specific KPI or may link to an overall team objective which their day to day task contributes to. Objectives should be specific and have realistic target dates for completion whilst also having scope to add, change or amend these as the member of staff and manager see fit.

An objective relating to a discussion on current health and well-being in the member of staff's role is a compulsory objective as part of the Check-in. This element can be discussed in as much detail as the staff and manager require and can facilitate discussion on matters such as workload, general support, working environment, teamwork, organisational culture and general health (physical and mental).

Before any follow up Check-ins, the member of staff will work towards achieving their objectives and in turn make a positive contribution to the work and culture of the Association. This will form the basis of the follow up Check-ins where the mutually agreed objectives will be discussed, noted, and amended with agreed timescales for their next Check-in.

4.4 Progress Between Check-ins

It is the staff member's responsibility to work towards their agreed objectives and their training and development needs in the period between Check-ins. Staff should not wait until just before their next Check-in to make progress and the process should enable them to work towards their objectives through their day to day tasks and responsibilities. Should a staff member wish to raise any concerns

or request additional support they should do so as soon as practicable and not wait until their next Check-in.

The process is flexible and staff can document their progress and reflections in between Check-ins in a way which is beneficial to them. Staff can utilise the Check-in Progress Log (see Appendix One) to document their progress and take this with them to their Check-in to guide their discussion and feedback to their manager, although this is not essential.

4.5 Follow up Check-ins

The staff member and manager will meet for their follow up Check-in and will take part in a two-way feedback discussion. The member of staff will comment on what progress has/has not been made in relation to their objectives and will advise their manager of any further support they may require, either from their manager or through another means such as training or support from another department or colleague for example. The manager will also provide feedback on each objective in terms of the staff's progress. From this discussion, the member of staff and manager may agree to amend an objective target date, create a new objective or make slight amendments dependent on business needs and priorities throughout the year.

The staff member will agree their comments and ensure they complete the 'job holder comments' section with a summary of their update (including the date prior to their update so that a timeline of their progress can be recorded). The manager will also agree their comments and ensure they complete the 'reviewer comments' section with a summary of their update (including the date prior to their update so that a timeline of their progress can be recorded). The manager should also check the 'objective complete' and 'objective completed date' if applicable.

The staff member and their manager will discuss, devise and evaluate any training and development needs, ensuring that 'description', 'identified', 'target date' and 'notes' categories are completed to give full details of the development need.

The staff member and their manager will diarise their next Check-in, which as a minimum will take place each quarter.

5. Compliance Audit / Reporting

HR will carry out a compliance audit on a quarterly basis and will implement the appropriate action dependent on the findings. The aim is to support full compliance with the policy and maximise the benefit to the organisation and the staff members.

The information gathered from the audit will be presented in a report format to the Staffing Sub-Committee twice a year.

6. Other Related Policies

- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Home Working Policy
- Learning Development and Further Education Policy
- Stress Management Policy
- Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

7. General Data Protection Regulation

ng homes will treat personal data in line with our obligations under the current General Data Protection Regulation and the Association's Data Protection Policy.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier in line with changes in the workplace or good practice guidelines.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy is equally applicable to all and has no detrimental impact on protected characteristic groups as specified within the Equality Act 2010.



Check-in Progress Log

Name	
Job Title	

No.	Objective Description	Due Date
<i>Example</i> 1.	<i>'Arrears Management - Minimise the percentage for current, former and total arrears in my patch. Focus on driving the level of arrears in my patch down to the minimum and work on any factors which could be contributing to higher levels.'</i>	<i>26/02/2021</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Objective No.	Progress	Date
<i>Example</i> 1.	<i>'- Devised arrears as a key objective to ensure that the percentage for current, former and total arrears is within our KPIs. - Reviewed the performance team's reports on arrears. - Have been contacting tenants in a proactive manner and ensuring they have claimed all their necessary entitlements to assist in their arrears.'</i>	<i>09/10/2020</i>

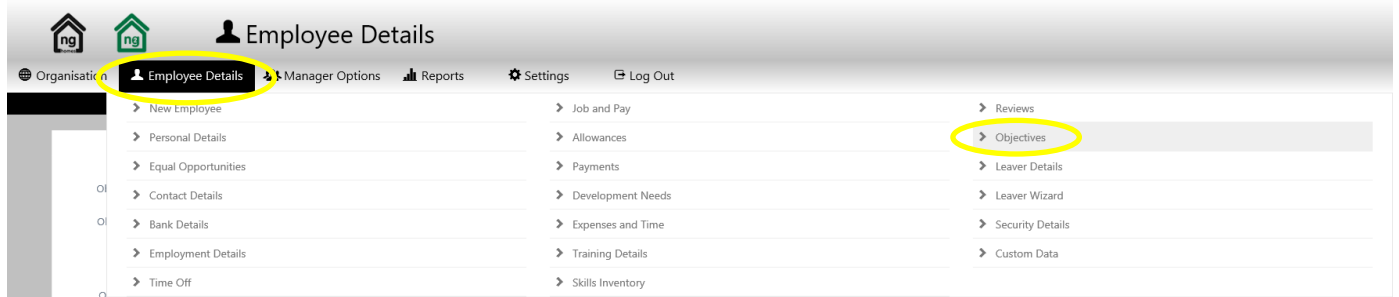
Use the above entries to discuss the steps you have taken to achieve your objectives with your manager at your Check-in.

Appendix Two – Step by Step Check-in Process

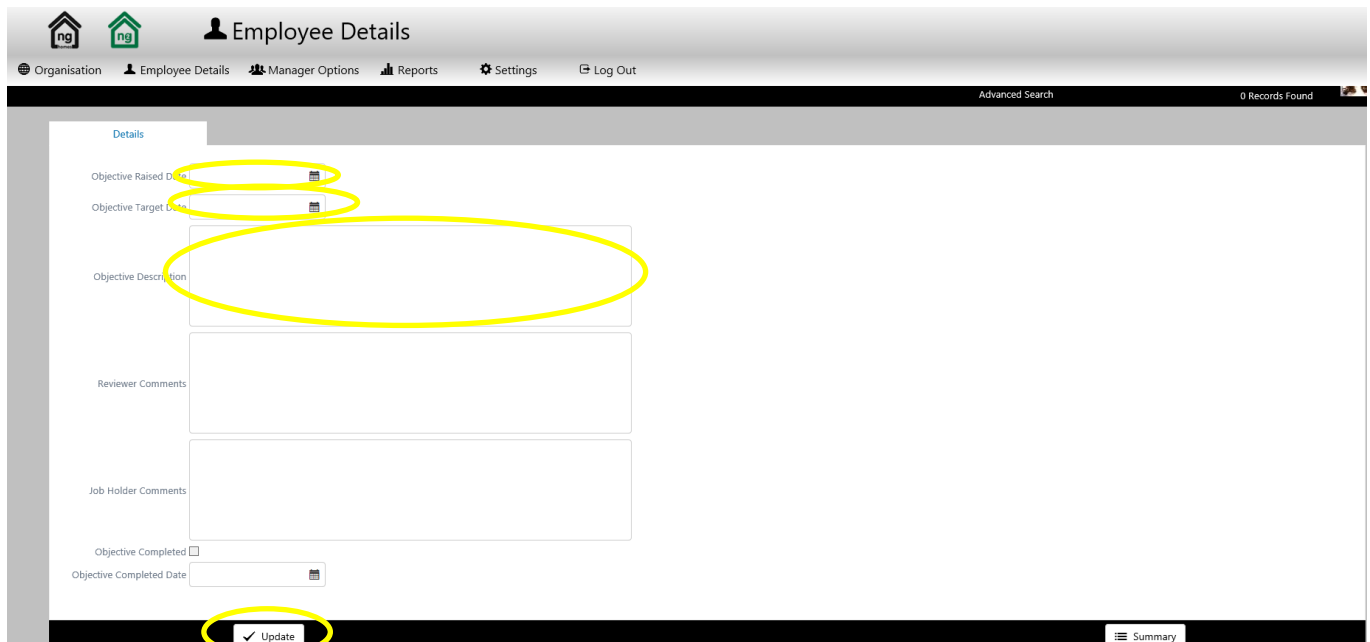
Step by Step – The Process

The below is intended to frame out the Check-in process however as advised above, the approach, objectives and frequency will be specific to you and your manager.

- Meet with your manager for your first Check-in (in person or on Microsoft Teams) for 60-90 minutes.
- Have at least one laptop and your job description at this Check-in.
- Discuss Expectations (use your job description if this helps facilitate the discussion).
- Form objectives (one of which includes the health and well-being objective) and agree on target completion dates.
- Log onto CIPHR Net, click 'Employee Details', 'Objectives':

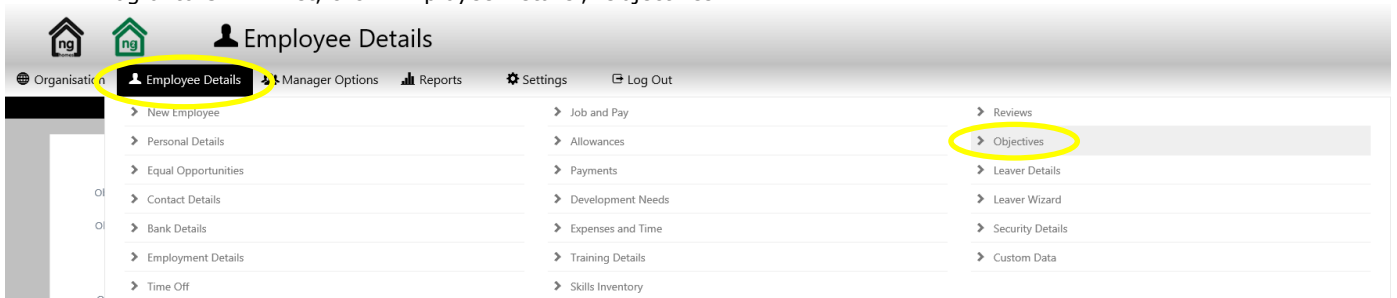


- Click 'Insert New Record' and input the following details for each of your objectives:
 - Objective Raised Date
 - Objective Target Date
 - Objective Description
- Click 'Update' to submit each entry.
- After each entry, your manager will enter their comments and agree this with you. Should there be nothing further to add from your entry, your manager will simply add the date and a comment to advise this has been fully discussed.

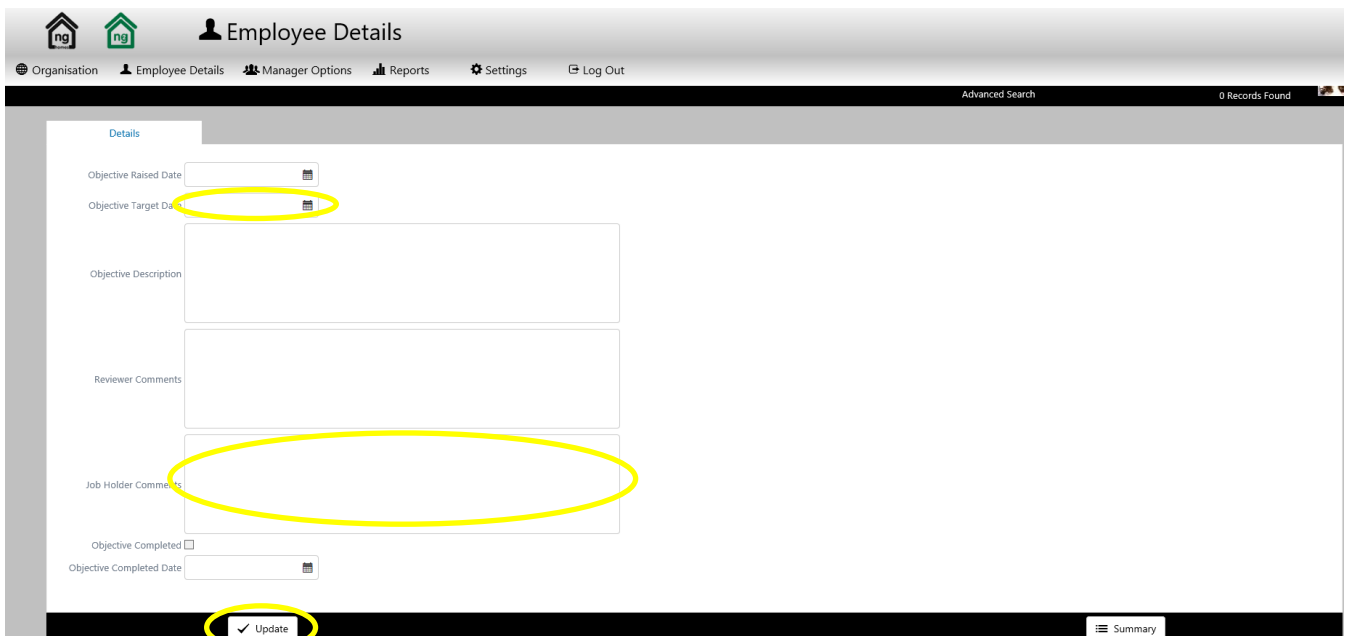


- Now complete the 'Development' section of the Check-in (refer to p4 for this).

- Agree on the frequency of your Check-in and diarise the next one in your outlook calendar.
- In the time between your first and second Check-in you should be conscious of your objectives and development and how your day to day tasks are contributing towards these.
- As you make progress you can use the Check-in Progress Log to document this or you can note this down in another form if you prefer. The important thing is that you are working towards completing them and not waiting until just before the next Check-in to start this.
- Meet with your manager for your next Check-in (in person or on Teams) for 60-90 minutes.
- Have at least one laptop (two preferable for this Check-in) and your Check-in Progress Log if you used this.
- Discuss the 'Feedback' element at this Check-in which should be a two-way process:
 - Discuss progress that has/has not been made towards your objectives and the reasons for this (there is no right or wrong answer and there can be many reasons that progress has not been made).
- Log onto CIPHR Net, click 'Employee Details', 'Objectives':



- Click on each of your objectives and input the following details:
 - Objective Target Date (if now changed)
 - Job Holder Comments, **ensuring you type the date before typing your comment.**
- Click 'Update' to submit each entry.

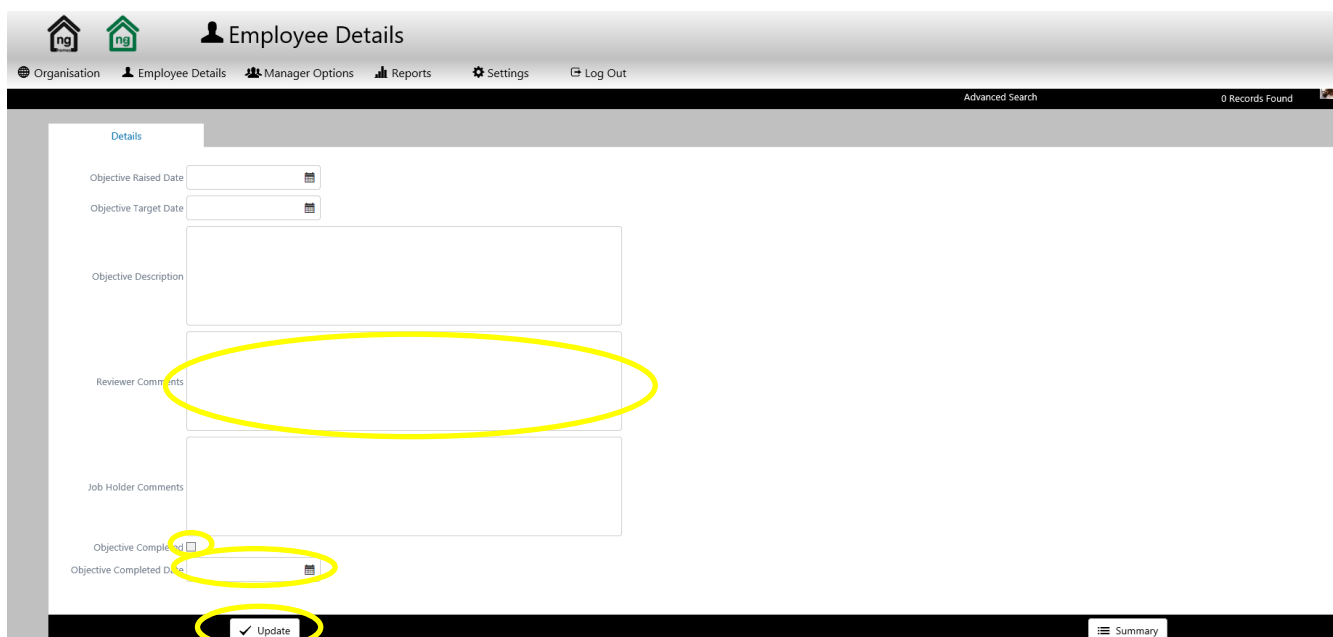


- After each objective you discuss, your manager will click on the objective and input the following details:
 - Reviewer Comments, **ensuring they type the date before typing their comment.**
 - Objective Complete* (if applicable)
 - Objective Completed Date* (if applicable)

**Please note that CIPHR Net will only allow managers to complete these boxes*

Should there be nothing further to add from your entry, your manager will simply add the date and a comment to advise this has been fully discussed.

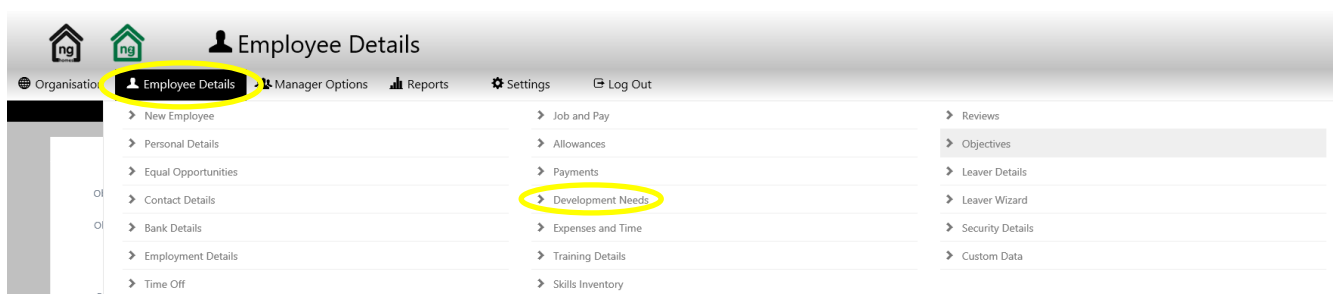
- Click 'update' to finalise the progress you've agreed for each objective.



- Complete the 'Development' section of the Check-in (refer to the below 'development' section).
- Agree on the frequency of your Check-in and diarise the next one in your outlook calendar.
- Your objectives can be amended, added and target completion dates changed at each Check-in dependent on your discussion, making it a continuous and open-ended process.

Development

- After each of your objectives have been discussed at your Check-ins, you should then go on to discuss training and development.
- Identifying training and development needs can be initiated by you or your manager and should be discussed in relation to the benefits the course will bring to your skillset and role.
- To record these entries, log onto CIPHR Net, click 'Employee Details', 'Development Needs':



- Click 'Insert New Record' and input the following detail:
 - Description

- Identified (date of entering)
- Target Date
- Notes (if applicable and ensuring you type the date next to any notes made)

- Click 'Update' to submit each entry:

The screenshot shows the 'Employee Details' page with the 'Development Needs' section. The form contains the following fields:

- Description: [Text input field]
- Course Code: [Dropdown menu]
- Priority: [Dropdown menu]
- Identified: [Text input field]
- Target Date: [Text input field]
- Addressed: [Text input field]
- Note: [Text area]

At the bottom of the form, there is a button labeled 'Update' with a checkmark icon, which is circled in yellow. To the right of the 'Update' button is a 'Summary' button.

- You should use the usual process for booking courses and further education and training requests.
- Like your objectives, your development section can be updated as appropriate by changing the target completion date and adding in an update of your progress in the notes section (ensure you type the date before entering your progress).