

Dunelm hires Whitbread boss Brittain to succeed Harrison as chair

Dunelm has appointed outgoing Whitbread boss Alison Brittain to succeed Andy Harrison in heading up the home furnishings retailer.

She will take up the post of non-executive director and chair designate while formal proceedings are completed that will allow her to ascend to the top job. Brittain announced that she would step down from her role at Whitbread last month.

Harrison said: "I am thrilled to have an individual of Alison's considerable talent and experience join our board.

["Dunelm has emerged from Covid as a bigger and stronger business](#), with an even bigger opportunity ahead. I am sure that Alison will help us to unlock this potential even faster. She has strong values that are clearly aligned to ours and I look forward to working with her as she takes over the reins in due course."

Prior to her role at Whitbread, Brittain held a number of senior roles in the UK banking industry, serving as [group director in the retail division of Lloyds Banking Group](#) and as [board director at Santander UK](#).

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Sales at Dunelm were boosted by 16% in the year to the end of last month to £1.55 million despite taking a knock in the third quarter as the cost of living crunch started to bite across retail.

In the final quarter the group's sales dipped by 6% to £358 million against "tough comparatives" as the business admitted that it could not "predict exactly how consumers will respond to the increasing pressures on their finances."

Nick Wilkinson, CEO of Dunelm, said [that the business had "successfully navigated" periods of consumer uncertainty and that "value and choice" was key to its offering.](#)

"We are currently seeing customers adapt to this environment in their own ways, utilising the breadth of our offer and price points across homewares; value and choice has always been at the very core of Dunelm, and we are intensely focused on continuing to strengthen this for our customers."