

Trainee Housing Solutions Officer



Job Description

1. POST DETAILS

Business Centre:	Housing
Division:	Housing Solutions Team
Working Hours:	37 hours per week
Grade:	6/7
Work Base:	Civic Centre, Addlestone
Prepared/Agreed by:	Andy Kefford

2. ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Reports to:	Housing Solutions Manager
Deputising Responsibility:	None
Directly Supervises:	None
Indirectly Supervises:	None

3. JOB PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

The Housing Solutions Team deliver an effective advisory and assistance service as part of a comprehensive approach to preventing and alleviating homelessness, making best use of social housing stock and delivering excellent services. The team provide core statutory services required by the housing legislation covering, housing advice, homelessness, private rented sector letting, the allocation and letting of social housing and temporary accommodation management.

The objective of this role is to learn on the job from experienced housing professionals and undertake associated tasks. You will be provided with training and guidance in the following areas:

- Housing advice and homelessness
- Allocation & letting of social housing
- Temporary accommodation management
- Magna Carta Lettings (private rented sector offers of housing)

You will complement the team by providing support and assistance to officers carrying out these roles by taking a hands on approach in all of the service functions the team deliver.

- To assess an applicant's Housing Register application, change of circumstances, medical and renewals.
- To provide tailored housing advice to applicants in housing need
- To assess, investigate and make decisions on homeless applications
- To develop the weekly rota in advance to ensure continual service cover and that duties are provided at all times.
- You will be part of a rota system to provide a telephone service to the housing solutions team catering for those unable to visit the council's offices
- To monitor relevant email inboxes and provide timely responses to enquiries
- To support the Council in the implementation of computer software
- To undertake home visit, private rented sector property visits, hospital visits and prison visits as appropriate

Customer Care:

To ensure all government legislation and guidelines are adhered to. To ensure value for money and high standards of customer care are maintained.

Equal Opportunities:

The Council is committed to achieving equality of opportunity and expects all employees to implement and promote its policies in all areas of their work including attending training as appropriate.

Health and Safety:

The Council is committed to providing a healthy and safe working environment and expects all employees to implement and promote policies in all areas of their work including attending training as appropriate.

4. MAIN DUTIES OF THE POST

- i. To provide a customer focussed Housing Allocation Service to any applicants requesting to join the housing register.
- ii. To work as part of the wider Housing Solutions Team to ensure the council discharges its Statutory Duties legally under relevant legislation and to support with the move on for those placed into temporary accommodation
- iii. To be able and willing to provide operational cover, when required, on all service areas within Housing Solutions. This will require you to acquire and maintain an up to date knowledge of the housing options available in the local area including within the private rented sector, full or shared home ownership, social and supported housing.
- iv. To acquire and maintain an up to date knowledge of relevant welfare benefits eligibility criteria, legislation and case law as well as local or national policies or initiatives.

- v. To recognise instances of fraudulent approaches for assistance and refer any matters as appropriate to the Corporate Fraud service, keeping detailed case notes and referring any matters as appropriate to line management.
- vi. To maintain housing leaflets or information offered to the public in paper or electronic format. To regularly review the Council's website to ensure it is up to date and accurate
- vii. To allocate to council accommodation and nominate to housing association properties in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme under the guidance of line management within agreed timescales to keep void times to a minimum using the required systems, policies and procedures.
- viii. To meet applicants in reception for interviews, to copy documents, to take in forms and to verify identification.
- ix. To carry out home visits in order to verify the circumstances and/or housing need of applicants according to agreed procedures.
- x. To make detailed investigations and undertake statutory assessments and issue decisions in accordance with the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).
- xi. To provide comprehensive housing advice to members of the public, who may be vulnerable or have multiple complex needs when presenting with housing problems. Including issuing of personalised housing plans.
- xii. To implement the weekly duties rota in advance and to participate on the rota as required. To participate in out of hours rota (for an additional fee) if required.
- xiii. To perform administrative tasks and functions across the service, including collating statistical data and highlight any trends to line management.
- xiv. To safeguard children and vulnerable adults by liaising with all other relevant statutory agencies. Consult with senior staff where safeguarding concerns are raised.
- xv. To attend any training sessions as may be deemed necessary and participate in regular one-to-one supervision and continuous professional development.
- xvi. To be aware of professional boundaries, safeguarding responsibilities and alert relevant officers of any issues or concerns through the proper channels and maintain timely and accurate case notes in all cases
- xvii. To carry out such other duties as may be required by line management appropriate to your skills and to a level of responsibility not exceeding the grade on which you are appointed. In accordance with the Equality Act any reasonable adjustments will be made to overcome any factor which puts a disabled employee or applicant at a disadvantage.

General

The above is a record of the main duties and responsibilities of this post at a given date. As necessary, following consultation, duties and responsibilities may change from time to time to meet the requirements of the service.

Person Specification

Please indicate whether the criteria is assessed against the application form or interview by using a ✓ in the columns to the right.

	Method of Assessment	
	App Form	Interview
<u>Essential Education & Training</u>		
Good general level of Secondary Education including in Maths and English.	✓	
<u>Desirable Education & Training</u>		
Degree educated	✓	
<u>Essential Experience & Knowledge</u>		
Experience of providing excellent customer service	✓	✓
Experience of working with individuals/families with complex and multiple needs	✓	✓
Understanding of the council's statutory housing role	✓	✓
Knowledge of Welfare Benefits	✓	
Experience of dealing with people in difficult situations.	✓	✓
Experience of using Microsoft Office, including proficiency in creating spreadsheets and high-quality documents.	✓	
<u>Desirable Experience & Knowledge</u>		
Knowledge of and experience with using Housing Management systems, Locata, Northgate	✓	
Experience of writing formal decision letters.	✓	

<p><u>Essential Personal Qualities/Personality</u></p> <p>Objective</p> <p>Confident</p> <p>Hard working</p> <p>Team Player</p> <p>Resilient</p> <p>Calm under pressure</p>	<p>✓</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
<p><u>Essential Skills</u></p> <p>Excellent interviewing and listening skills</p> <p>Negotiation and mediation skills</p> <p>Ability to assess complex and sensitive information in an objective manner.</p> <p>Ability to maintain confidentiality where necessary and share information where appropriate in line with protocols</p> <p>Ability to prioritise workload</p> <p>Ability to keep clear and concise records</p> <p>Ability to deal with customers in difficult situations</p> <p>Interpersonal skills</p> <p>Numerate/Literate</p> <p>Ability to extract data from systems for analysis.</p> <p>Commitment to continuous development in housing knowledge</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p></p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p></p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p></p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>✓</p>
<p><u>Special Requirements</u></p> <p>Required to have a current full driving licence, with a vehicle available and insured for business use.</p> <p>Required to undertake visits to people in their homes unaccompanied.</p> <p>Willing to work outside normal working hours (on occasion).</p>	<p>✓</p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p></p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>