

Job Profile comprising Job Description and Person Specification

Job Description

Job Title: Housing Assessment Officer	Grade: PO1
Section: Housing Assessment and Adaptations	Directorate: Housing and Regeneration
Responsible to following manager: Deputy Manager: Housing Assessment	Responsible for following staff:
Post Number/s: 1	Last review date:

Working for the Richmond/Wandsworth Shared Staffing Arrangement

This role is employed under the Shared Staffing Arrangement between Richmond and Wandsworth Councils. The overall purpose of the Shared Staffing Arrangement is to provide the highest quality of service at the lowest attainable cost.

Staff are expected to deliver high quality and responsive services wherever they are based, as well as having the ability to adapt to sometimes differing processes and expectations.

The Shared Staffing Arrangement aims to be at the forefront of innovation in local government and the organisation will invest in the development of its staff and ensure the opportunities for progression that only a large organisation can provide.

Job Purpose

- To be responsible for assessing Housing Register applications according to the Council's Housing Allocations Schemes and assist residents, helping them to find suitable, alternative accommodation.
- To provide a flexible and responsive service for housing register applicants by delivering services from Richmond and Wandsworth Council offices and community-based locations, ensuring comprehensive housing advice is available for customers, staff and partner agencies.
- To efficiently manage a personal caseload and/or alphabetical 'patch' of Housing applicants and work closely with your applicants to support them, ensuring a proactive problem – solving approach to applicants housing circumstances.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities

- To manage a caseload of applications made under the Council(s) Housing Allocation Schemes, providing accurate advice and guidance on the Housing Register process and allocations schemes. To ensure customers are kept informed of progress and the options available to them in line with service procedures and standards.
- Carry out accurate casework investigation; assessment; decision making on applications; and advising applicants of outcomes in line with legislation and policy including, obtaining medical reports, verifying information, carrying out home visits as directed and prioritising applications in accordance with agreed policy.
- To be part of a duty rota across both boroughs meeting with applicants who come into each of the Housing Offices to discuss their housing application.
- To take the Housing Assessment Service out into the Richmond and Wandsworth communities by providing housing surgeries in the Job Centre Plus, Children's Centres and other locations as required.
- To recognise and be proactive in identifying cases that need to be referred to other services for support and assistance and ensure they are connected with the interventions they need.
- To provide robust decisions on applications for affordable housing, including working with vulnerable people and external organisations.
- To establish relationships with colleagues working for local social housing providers, ensuring applications are managed within local service level agreements and protocols.
- To liaise with statutory and voluntary agencies, and other council services in both Richmond and Wandsworth boroughs as necessary to manage expectations and achieve casework outcomes.
- To offer full and comprehensive advice to applicants about their prospects for rehousing in a manner which is considerate and empathetic towards the applicant's perspective.
- Ensure all applicants within the offer range are made and kept offer ready including: ensuring applications are updated following new-borns; ensuring 1 bed single vulnerable homeless applicants have risk assessments and support plans in place where required; ensuring applicants have an up to date financial

assessment and savings for rent in advance; keeping applicants with limited leave to remain under review to ensure they are eligible to remain on the Housing Register and be considered for social housing

- Identify and advise working applicants with an income level which may enable them to access affordable and intermediate rent properties and low-cost home ownership about the housing options that may be available to them in the Richmond and Wandsworth boroughs.
- Work with the Housing OTs to keep applications on the physical disability queue up to date and assess suitability for Physical Disability Queue properties.
- To implement the Council's Tenancy Policy regarding Flexible Fixed Term tenancies and other tenancy change requests by undertaking pre-end of tenancy reviews, with strict achievement of necessary deadlines and timescales and determining whether a new tenancy should be granted and the terms of new tenancies. To recommend refusal to do so where appropriate and to notify the tenant with adequate reasons.
- Engage in partnership working with agencies involved with customers and liaise with appropriate Council departments across the SSA including Revenues and Benefits, Social Services, Environmental Health and Community Partnerships to ensure robust and cohesive casework management.
- To assist in the provision and drafting of replies for reports in respect of enquiries from Councillors, MPs, the Local Government Ombudsman and other agencies such as solicitors, Citizens Advice etc. as directed and according to their complexity and/or sensitivity of the subject.
- To train and induct newly appointed colleagues.

Generic Duties and Responsibilities

- To contribute to the continuous improvement of the services of the Boroughs of Wandsworth and Richmond.
- To comply with relevant Codes of Practice, including the Code of Conduct and policies concerning data protection and health and safety.
- To adhere to security controls and requirements as mandated by the SSA's policies, procedures and local risk assessments to maintain confidentiality, integrity, availability and legal compliance of information and systems

- To promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, maintaining an awareness of the equality and diversity protocol/policy and working to create and maintain a safe, supportive and welcoming environment where all people are treated with dignity and their identity and culture are valued and respected.
- To understand both Councils' duties and responsibilities for safeguarding children, young people and adults as they apply to the role within the council.
- The profile is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the duties the post holder will carry out. Other reasonable duties commensurate with the level of the post, including supporting emergency and priority situations, will form part of the role.

Additional Information

- May be required to work after office hours to deal with emergencies e.g. security incidents, late bookings, sit ins (Refusal of client to leave the building).
- Attends large scale emergency responses as directed e.g. urgent temporary rehousing scenarios and/or other civil contingencies.

Team structure

For the current structure please go to The Loop.

When advertising externally please add the current team structure here and remove the sentence above.

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Our Values and Behaviours

The values and behaviours we seek from our staff draw on the high standards of the two boroughs, and we prize these qualities in particular:

Being open. This means we share our views openly, honestly and in a thoughtful way. We encourage new ideas and ways of doing things. We appreciate and listen to feedback from each other.

Being supportive. This means we drive the success of the organisation by making sure that our colleagues are successful. We encourage others and take account of the challenges they face. We help each other to do our jobs.

Being positive. Being positive and helpful means we keep our goals in mind and look for ways to achieve them. We listen constructively and help others see opportunities and the way forward. We have a 'can do' attitude and are continuously looking for ways to help each other improve.

Person Specification Requirements			Assessed by A/I/T/C (see below for explanation)
Knowledge	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Detailed knowledge of housing legislation and its implications on current issues including case law, relevant Housing Acts and Homelessness Acts.		X	A/I
Knowledge of homelessness legislation, landlord and tenant law.		X	A/I
A good knowledge of services, benefits and support available to applicants experiencing housing problems.	X		A/I
Experience	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Experience of working within a customer service, housing or lettings service.	X		A/I

Experience of carrying out interviews, investigations, negotiations.	X		A/I
Experience of effective partnership working and managing the expectations of other services and agencies.		X	A/I
Experience of effective record keeping, including electronically held information.	X		A/I
Experience of working successfully to performance targets and deadlines.	X		A/I
Skills	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Highly motivated with a clear commitment to delivering a high-quality service.	X		A/I
Ability to have honest conversations with customers about their housing options and support their decision making while managing expectations.		X	A/I
Ability to deal sensitively and professionally with members of the public from diverse backgrounds and circumstances.	X		A/I
Excellent communication skills including the ability to write detailed case notes and technical letters.	X		A/I
Ability to work unsupervised, prioritise workloads and achieve targets and deadlines.	X		A/I
Qualifications	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Minimum of 2 A Levels grade C and above or equivalent.		X	C

A – Application form / CV

I – Interview

T – Test

C - Certificate