

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

Designation:	Accommodation Assessment and Lettings Team Leader	Grade:PO3
Reports to (Designation):	Temporary Accommodation Operations Manager	Grade: PO7
Directorate:	Housing Regeneration & Public Realm	Division: Housing Services

Main Purpose of the job:

To manage a team of frontline officers who arrange emergency and temporary accommodation placements and appropriate referrals into supported accommodation, ensuring all placements and referrals are carried out in a timely manner, making the best use of all available housing stock at all times.

Arrange emergency accommodation on behalf of other Council services, including Children's Social Services and Adult Social Care.

Co-ordinate available properties in the private rented sector and in conjunction with Housing Caseworkers and the Tenancy Management and Resettlement Officers identify highest priority households to be put forward for Direct Lets to prevent and relieve homelessness.

To ensure high quality offers, suitability and discharge of duty decisions are made in a timely manner relating to offers of properties (temporary accommodation & private rented properties) and that staff work proactively to find an appropriate housing solution to bring the Council's 'relief' / full housing duty to an end

Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and guidelines so that accommodation is allocated based on need and all offers of accommodation are suitable.

Proactively contribute to the council's action plan to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation by monitoring and maximising move on opportunities from temporary accommodation and supported housing.

Effectively manage waiting lists for supported housing, ensuring priority is given to those in greatest need.

Ensure accurate records are maintained of those in all types of emergency, temporary and supported housing, maintaining statistical information for local and central government statistical returns.

Summary of Responsibilities and Personal Duties:

MANAGEMENT ROLES & EXPECTATIONS

As a Team Leader/Manager you will:

1. Adapt the planned delivery of services to ensure changing community and customer needs.
2. Monitor and review service outcomes ensuring effective delivery of personal and team objectives.

3. Ensure the continuous improvement in services using creative and informative inventions as well as effective performance and quality management.
4. Plan, deploy and co-ordinate people resources to meet changing operational needs.
5. Ensure services meet statutory and identified organisational standards and regulations.
6. Ensure an understanding of the impact of your service on other functions.
7. To oversee the co-ordination of a range of accommodation options, including but not restricted to, temporary accommodation (including emergency Bed and Breakfast), Private Sector Leased accommodation, Private Managed Accommodation, Direct Lets and Supported Housing, ensuring maximum occupancy of available accommodation to minimise void times.
8. To effectively recruit, induct and train staff, undertake regular supervisions and set and monitor objectives; ensure annual performance development appraisals are completed alongside learning and development plans and any performance and HR issues are dealt with as they arise.
9. To be responsible for leading and motivating the team on a day to day basis to deliver a high quality, professional and customer centric service to internal and external customers; provide and/or facilitate coaching and mentoring and effectively address poor behaviours and poor performance.
10. To promote a philosophy of putting customer needs first at every opportunity and to put in place arrangements to action this.
11. To oppose and where possible eradicate all forms of discrimination, making a positive contribution to managing diversity, both as an employer and service provider.
12. To raise performance in the team by contributing to a culture of continuous improvement.
13. To manage the service in a way that achieves strong performance and continuous improvement in the following broad areas (the list below is not exhaustive):
 - Identify gaps where specific accommodation needs cannot be met, finding creative solutions to address the gaps
 - Manage the provision of accommodation to effectively fulfil the council's homelessness relief duties, and allocate emergency and temporary accommodation, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, caselaw, guidance, policy and procedures
 - Ensure rent accounts are set up for each placement and assist to monitor rent accounts and maximise income by ensuring that caseworkers submit Housing Benefit claims at the point of sign up, ensuring any void temporary accommodation is minimised
 - Co-ordinate the allocation of available private rented properties, ensure suitable applicants are identified in a timely manner to best meet housing need and bring homelessness duties to an end
 - identify when accommodation duties have ended and oversee discharge of duty, ensuring referrals are made to other agencies as part of the discharge process as necessary
 - Process requests for move on accommodation from supported housing providers and facilitate the most appropriate move on option, once assessed, in a timely manner so that supported housing is always occupied by those that need it the most

- Coordinating moves out of emergency and temporary accommodation in a timely manner, for example, when leased properties are being handed back, or temporary accommodation is being redeveloped.
14. To identify cases of fraud and misrepresentation and ensure appropriate legal action can be taken
 15. To provide effective and timely responses to complaints and enquiries from customers, Councillors and MPs, taking steps to resolve service issues at the earliest opportunity. To provide professional advice to Councillors and other officers on relevant areas of service delivery, ensuring compliance with the Council's standing orders
 16. To develop and maintain systems, making efficient and effective use of ICT to ensure that appropriate management information is provided and made accessible to senior management and commissioners, submitting periodic performance returns as required. To adhere to General Data Protection requirements at all times when collecting, recording and handling personal data
 17. Engage and support any statutory review process relating to allocations or a discharge of duty resulting from an offer of a property made by the team and to ensure that offers are compliant.
 18. To adhere to policies and procedures relating to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults
 19. To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
 20. Work flexibility and attend ad-hoc meetings in evenings or weekends, as required
 21. Undertake Out of Hours Duty on a rotating basis each month.
 22. Undertake Duty Manager role within the reception area as and when required
 23. To undertake any additional duties as required by the service

Internal Contacts: These include officers from across the Housing Services Division, officers from across the Council eg Housing Benefits, Strategic Development, Childrens Young People Directorate, Corporate Procurement Team

External Contacts: This will include Lewisham Council and other Registered Providers, Landlords, Landlord Agents, Capital Letters, Police, Advocates.

To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's relevant codes and procedures.

All employees are required to participate in the Performance Evaluation Scheme (PES) and to undertake appropriate training and development identified to enhance their work.

Undertake other duties, commensurate with the grade, as may reasonably be required.

Consideration will be given to restructuring the duties of this post for a disabled postholder

THIS JOB DESCRIPTION MAY NEED TO BE AMENDED BY THE DIRECTORATE TO MEET
THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE SERVICE.

Number of fully managed staff: up to 8

Title: Accommodation Assessment & Lettings Officer	Grade: S02	No of posts 8
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Number of partially managed staff: 0

Title:	Grade	No of posts
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PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Accommodation Assessment & Lettings Team Leader

POST NO:

DEPARTMENT: Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

GRADE: PO3

Note to Candidates

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge and experience needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Those categories marked 'S' will be used especially for the purpose of shortlisting.

Please ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are addressed specifically in relation to the role for which you are applying when addressing the requirements of this person specification where appropriate.

If you are a disabled person, but are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria you will be shortlisted and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

Equality & Diversity

Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community
S

Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post **S**

Knowledge

Excellent knowledge and detailed understanding of Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and other relevant housing and homelessness legislation (S188, S193, Discharge of Duty and out of borough placements), case law and guidance **S**

Knowledge of Landlord and Tenant Legislation, the Housing Act 1985 and Protection from Eviction Act 1977 **S**

Suitability and affordability assessments for accommodation provided under homelessness provisions **S**

Up to date knowledge of the welfare benefit system and its application- **S**

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System

Comprehensive knowledge and experience of homelessness decision making, accommodation duties and statutory reviews within a local authority setting

A good understanding of budgetary control **S**

Aptitude

Ability to maintain databases and work effectively with IT systems Aptitude for working creatively and acting on own initiative.

Ability to identify business risks at an early stage, alerting appropriate managers and developing possible solutions.

Ability to prioritise competing demands in a pressurised environment, recognize service priorities and manage a high workload within agreed targets.

Ability to meet performance targets and deliver positive outcomes.

Ability to take a proactive role in reviewing and developing working practices in order to continually improve service delivery.

Aptitude for utilising new technology to help develop the service.

Able to prepare and present reports and to analyse statistical information

Skills

(Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested)

(To Be Tested – S)

Strong interpersonal skills to effectively communicate verbally and in writing and build trust mutually respectful relationships with a range of audiences, including Councillors, residents, stakeholders and commissioners, including the ability to write clear and concise reports.

Strong negotiation, advocacy and influential skills to effectively implement system change, imbed new and complex initiatives and build and maintain wide networks internally within the council and externally with partner agencies and the voluntary sector.

Ability to deliver excellent customer care and adapt behaviour of self and team to support residents in a timely way and respond effectively to challenging behaviour.

Ability to collect and analyse data and critically reflect on work practices to improve services, using new technologies to improve services delivery and accessibility.

Ability to motivate and develop staff, effectively manage and support staff through change, provide welfare support to staff covering frontline work and inspire team work and a collaborative culture with internal and external colleagues.

Strong analytical and numeracy skills to carry out complex housing and financial assessments and the ability to make difficult and contentious decisions on a range of issues. **S**

Experience

Proven experience of designing and implementing robust and efficient business processes that have delivered tangibly improved services and dramatically improved efficiency. **S**

Proven experience of reviewing performance and service levels, using performance management techniques to drive service delivery and improvements, implementing robust plans to ensure excellent service delivery is maintained, responding to, and escalating, quality assurance concerns. **S**

Proven experience of staff management, delivering and leading change and transformation across a multi-disciplinary team, and developing staff to meet their full potential. **S**

Proven excellent communication, mediation skills dealing with landlords and prospective tenants particularly those who may have disabilities or are vulnerable

Advanced knowledge and experience of using Microsoft packages, including Word, Excel and PowerPoint packages.

Good knowledge of budget management and delivering services within budget. S

General Education

Good standard of education to include Maths and English GCSE Grade C and above or equivalent experience.

Evidence of relevant continuing professional development

Personal Qualities

To be personable and presentable

Organised and target driven S

Able to set and maintain the highest standards in professional relationships and behaviour with customers, colleagues and other external contacts S

Commitment to high levels of attendance and punctuality

Flexible and proactive, with a commercially-minded approach to developing services and sustaining relationships with landlords S

Willingness to undertake home visits which are effective and take into account health and safety requirements.

High standard of integrity

Ability to remain calm when working under pressure

Circumstances

Flexible approach to working hours, able to attend meetings outside normal office hours (including evenings) and to work reasonable additional hours as required.

DBS Disclosure Required? **No** ☐ **Basic** ☒ **Enhanced** ☐

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor)

Physical

Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post