

**JOB PROFILE**

**Post No.**

**Post Title:** Trainee Homelessness Prevention Officer

**Unit/Team:** Housing Advice and Enabling Team

**Grade:** D to E

**Service:** Communities and Homes

**Reports to:** Homeless Prevention Supervisor

**Issue Date:** July 2025

**PURPOSE OF THE TEAM**

The team consists of six main areas of activity.

- Outreach work with those who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping, in hospital and require support to return home.
- Providing housing options, advice and guidance to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness with the aim to assist with prevention of homelessness at the earliest possible stage.
- Administering applications from residents approaching the Council as homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- The provision of temporary accommodation including the provision of private sector leased accommodation.
- Determining applications to join the Council's Housing Waiting List

**PURPOSE OF THE ROLE**

The purpose of this role is to provide support and administrative functions for the team with particular emphasis on the delivery of Homelessness and Housing Advice. The postholder will be required to work closely with the Homelessness Prevention and Waiting List Officers to deliver a holistic service that meets the needs of the customer and the CANDO values of the Council.

The Homeless Prevention Team Supervisor and Housing Advice Team Leader will ensure the appointed candidate is nurtured and developed with the aim to become a Homeless Prevention Officer within 24 months. To achieve this the appointed candidate will have access to the Corporate Induction along with a full introduction to Housing Advice and Homelessness. Working to a targeted plan with set objectives across the 18 months. The aim is to develop key knowledge on homelessness

legislation and the delivering of the service, with a combination of training provided externally and internally to support the required development in this role.

The post holder will work through a structured training programme in the following areas:

- Housing Needs and Advice
- Homelessness

## **1. ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1.1 Housing Advice**

- 1.1.1 To provide a drop-in service and phone service to people that approach the Council for guidance on their housing situation.
- 1.1.2 To learn the housing need of those approaching for housing advice and provide a tailored advice to all.
- 1.1.3 Take all necessary steps to prevent and relieve homelessness occurring at first point of contact where possible.
- 1.1.4 To arrange and manage emergency temporary accommodation placements under supervision of the Homelessness Prevention Officer and Private Rented Accommodation Officer
- 1.1.5 To carry out investigations under direction of the Homelessness Prevention Officer in order to assess applications for homelessness assistance under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.
- 1.1.6 To carry out investigations under direction of the Waiting List Officer in order to assess applications for the Council's Housing Waiting List in accordance with Part VI of the Housing Act 1996.
- 1.1.7 Assist clients to seek alternative accommodation within the Private Rented Sector by providing a 'Finding Accommodation' service, arranging and accompanying clients to viewings of properties.

### **1.2 Financial Advice**

- 1.2.1 Work with customers in person (within the office environment or client's home), in writing / electronic means, or over the telephone to obtain sufficient information and evidence to support a claim for Benefit or Discretionary Housing Payments
- 1.2.2 Work with customers in temporary accommodation to resolve queries relating to their claim for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction
- 1.2.3 To learn the financial need of all people who approach for Housing Advice and provide tailored advice on their financial situation obtaining sufficient

information and evidence to support applications to the Homelessness Prevention Fund

- 1.2.8 Work with external agencies referring cases where more in-depth budgetary / debt advice and support is required.

### **1.3 Customer Care**

- 1.3.1 To ensure that customers receive a high-quality professional service that meets their needs, the purpose of the Service and the Council's corporate priorities.
- 1.3.2 To monitor the progress of cases in your workload, ensuring records are completed accurately and in a timely manner.
- 1.3.3 To integrate equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices into all aspects of the post and in particular, work with disadvantaged groups and socially excluded communities.
- 1.3.4 Ensuring the provision of good customer care and customer services in line with the Council's 'CAN DO' values and Equality and Diversity policies, ensuring they are promoted and embedded in service delivery.

### **1.4 Service Delivery and Improvement**

- 1.4.1 To work across the Housing Advice and Enabling Team and wider Communities and Homes Service to ensure that services are robust, harmonious, and meet the needs of clients.
- 1.4.2 To work with the Team Supervisor to ensure that there is a holistic approach to service delivery putting the client at the centre of what we deliver.
- 1.4.3 To provide timely and robust key-performance data to identify blockages to service delivery at an early stage.
- 1.4.4 To create a culture of continuous improvement within the team, with all team members involved and responsible for taking the service forward.
- 1.4.5 To be innovative and creative with trialling new ways of delivering a service that meets the needs of clients.
- 1.4.6 Actively contribute to the future development of the service.
- 1.4.7 Working with others across the Communities and Homes Service to make best use of IT solutions to assist the work of the team, ensuring it meets our needs and the needs of clients.

## **1.5 External Relations**

- 1.5.1 Promote new and strengthen existing partnerships in order to publicise the service and improve services to customers.
- 1.5.3 Represent the Council at meetings with internal departments and external organisations.

## **1.6 Self-Development**

- 1.6.1 Ensure you have up to date knowledge to enable you to deliver a service that meets the needs of the individual customer, whilst complying with legislative requirements.
- 1.6.2 Demonstrate commitment, vision and leadership to delivery of the Housing Advice and Enabling Team Aims and Objectives
- 1.6.3 Take responsibility for identifying your own development and training requirements (technical and interpersonal skills based)
- 1.6.4 Strive for continuous improvement of yourself and the team.
- 1.6.5 To actively engage in the 1:1 Support and Supervision Meetings framework.

## **2. OTHER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 2.1 Any other reasonable duties as requested by your manager, in line with individual skills and knowledge, including one off projects.
- 2.2 To support the efficient uses of resources within the Housing Advice and Enabling Team you may be required to undertake other roles within the team commensurate with your grade.

## **3. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

None

## **4. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsible for protection of public funds through correct administration of the allocation of housing and other financial assistance.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSETS AND DATA**

Responsibility for all the assets within the team, such as IT and office furniture and equipment, and data, especially confidential personal data of all customers

## **6. EXTENT OF PUBLIC CONTACT**

- Residents
- The Police and Department for Families and Children.
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Voluntary and statutory agencies.
- GP's, Health Visitors, Mental Health Resource Centre, Occupational Therapists, Housing Associations.
- Other local authorities, solicitors and other professional organisations.
- CA and Mediation Services.
- Other services within the Council and Senior Officers within Housing and other services.
- Councillors and the MP.

## **7. WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT**

- Office based with some out of office working with other agencies and home visits where appropriate.
- Travel to and from external training courses and meetings
- You will be required to have a Basic Disclosure and Barring Service check.

## **8. CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

All staff have to act within the Council's rules and follow all reasonable management requirements. These are contained within: The Council's Standing Orders, Employment Policies, Constitution and Code of Conduct for Employees. Other documents may be introduced at times setting out rules of the Council. These will cover responsibilities and requirements for the following:

Financial Accounting  
Equality and Diversity  
Health and Safety  
Risk Management  
Anti- Fraud  
Data Quality and Data Protection  
Business Continuity  
Major Emergency Plan  
Procurement and Contract Management  
Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Copies of the relevant rules and policy are available on the staff intranet or from your manager.

In addition, all employees are expected to behave in line with our Values and Behaviours and challenge other employees whose behaviour is against our values.

**9. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Refer to Person Specification attached.

**Signed as agreed:**

Postholder

Date

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Post: Trainee Homelessness Prevention Officer

For effective performance of the duties of the post the postholder will be able to demonstrate that they have the skills and/or knowledge detailed in 'Essential Criteria'.

Criteria	Essential/ Desirable	Method of Assessment
To have numeracy and literacy skills to be able to undertake financial calculations and communicate effectively with customers in writing.	E	A,I
To be able to put across information in a clear and concise manner in a face-to-face setting or over the telephone.	E	A, I,
To be able to show where activities undertaken have required the accurate and timely recording of notes and actions taken.	E	A, I,
Good time management skills and the ability to work effectively under pressure and prioritise to meet deadlines	E	A, I,
Experience of providing a high standard of customer service to clients who demonstrate a range of challenging behaviours	E	A, I
The ability to work well within a team and under own initiative and of maintaining professional boundaries with customers and partner agencies	E	A,I
A good understanding of the importance of confidentiality, safe practice, safeguarding, anti-discriminatory practice and equal opportunity	E	A,I,
An understanding of the issues facing clients who are struggling financially or have issues regarding finding and maintaining a home.	E	D
Full driving license and access to a vehicle to undertake home visits across the Borough.	E	A

Application	A
Interview	I
Test (written, presentation, practical – e.g., word processing)	T
References	R
Documentary – e.g., certificates	D

## **Trainee Homelessness Prevention Officer – Training Plan**

For successful progress through the training programme, the Trainee must demonstrate competence in the following areas in order to progress.

Development Objectives to be completed in the first 18 Months:

- Successfully complete external training on Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996
- Undertake comprehensive internal training on all aspects of housing advice
- Participate in the corporate induction programme
- Shadow colleagues across housing teams to gain a broad understanding of service functions
- Become proficient in using relevant IT systems and tools
- Demonstrate confidence in handling telephone enquiries and providing general housing advice
- Successfully complete triage assessments for customers presenting as homeless
- Conduct office-based interviews, confidently assessing customers' housing needs
- Understand the purpose and structure of the Personal Housing Plan, including setting and reviewing goals with customers
- Develop a clear understanding of the statutory duties owed to customers, the criteria for accepting those duties, and the overall customer journey

In the final six months of the programme

- Demonstrate competence in making decisions regarding eligibility and intentionality