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| **Job Description** |



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| **JOB TITLE** | Welfare Support Officer |
| **REPORTS TO** | UK Resettlement Team Leader |
| **DIRECT REPORTS** | N/A  |
| **INDIRECT REPORTS** | N/A  |
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| **PURPOSE OF THE JOB ROLE** |
| To engage with customers on a wide range of housing, welfare, and benefits matters through face-to-face contact, telephone advice, home visits and remote support. To work proactively with both in-house teams and external statutory and voluntary agencies to secure the best outcomes for customers. To maximise available resources by ensuring households access all eligible benefits and by exploring every available funding stream to provide support; particularly for those who have recently been granted refugee status, arrived in the UK under a government-funded resettlement scheme, or entered the UK through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. To contribute as part of the wider team in delivering an effective and efficient Homelessness Prevention and Homelessness Service, in line with the Royal Borough’s statutory responsibilities and strategic aims. |
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| **MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| * Deliver excellent customer service by providing appropriate and effective solutions to housing and welfare issues, ensuring a high level of customer satisfaction.
* Provide welfare and benefit advice face-to-face, by telephone, and online in relation to housing options and homelessness prevention, at any of the buildings used by the Royal Borough to deliver customer services.
* Carry out home and off-site visits to support customers with their housing and welfare needs.
* Provide housing, welfare, and benefit advice; together with guidance on employment opportunities and life in the UK to refugees who have recently been granted status, either following a positive asylum claim or on arrival under a government resettlement scheme, to support their successful integration within the borough.
* Conduct outreach visits to customers in their homes, prisons, hostels, hotels, hospitals, or other relevant locations in line with agreed procedures.
* Offer expert advice and assistance to stakeholders, advocates, and customers experiencing welfare and benefit issues, working proactively to prevent homelessness and referring cases to partner agencies where appropriate.
* Advise on benefit eligibility to maximise household income, alongside wider housing advice, ensuring a comprehensive and effective service.
* Maintain an in-depth knowledge of welfare benefits, housing legislation, and wider services available within the borough. Achieve individual performance objectives, targets, and service standards, and contribute to the delivery of team plans and wider service objectives.
* Effectively manage workload priorities, ensuring all performance targets and deadlines are met.
* Record and update case information accurately and promptly across relevant case management systems, in line with guidance and established procedures.
* Ensure customer records and management information are accurate and up to date at all times.
* Support the UK Resettlement Team Leader with asylum and refugee work, including the Afghan Resettlement and Homes for Ukraine schemes, as required.
* Comply with Council financial regulations, particularly in relation to homelessness prevention and benefit fraud.
* Build and maintain effective working relationships with internal departments and external agencies, following established referral procedures, protocols, and processes.
* Represent the Council at meetings, including occasional out-of-hours commitments, as required.
* Undertake ongoing professional development and actively participate in training, keeping up to date with legislation, case law, best practice, council policies, procedures, and initiatives, and deliver training to stakeholders where appropriate.
* Carry out any other duties commensurate with the grade of the post.
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| **This job description outlines the main duties and responsibilities but does not detail every task required for service delivery. You may be asked to take on additional duties at an equivalent level, on a temporary or permanent basis.** |
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| **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Standard responsibilities that apply to all council staff or specific groups are set out in the [Employee Handbook](https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/media/2074/download/), these include:

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| * Corporate management
* Information governance compliance
* Whistleblowing
* General Safeguarding Statement
* Project and work management
* Working in a team
 | * Risk management including Health & Safety
* Business continuity
* Equality of Opportunity
* Our corporate values
* Budget management
* Specific responsibilities for managers
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Local operating procedures and specific activities/tasks will be supplied by the service. |
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| **PERSON SPECIFICATION** |
| **Qualifications/Education/Training**  | * Educated to at least A-level/NVQ Level 3 or experience in relevant field
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| **Experience**  | * Comprehensive understanding of welfare benefits - including social security legislation, housing benefit, council tax support, tax credits, Universal Credit, and wider welfare reforms, with the ability to apply this knowledge to support households in maximising their income and sustaining accommodation.
* Awareness of national resettlement programmes - including a sound understanding of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and the Afghan and Syrian Resettlement Schemes, and the specific support needs of those arriving under these routes.
* Knowledge of the UK asylum and refugee system - including refugee status determination, humanitarian protection, and the challenges facing newly recognised refugees (desirable).
* Strong organisational and time management skills - with the ability to manage a varied caseload, prioritise competing demands, meet deadlines, and maintain high standards in line with quality assurance procedures.
* Proven ability to manage complex and sensitive situations - remaining calm, empathetic, friendly, and professional when working with vulnerable customers, often in challenging or high-pressure circumstances.
* Effective advocacy and representation skills - able to make clear, accurate, and persuasive written and verbal representations on behalf of customers to statutory bodies, housing providers, and partner agencies.
* Partnership working experience - with a track record of building successful relationships and working collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders, including statutory services, voluntary organisations, and community groups, to achieve positive outcomes for customers.
* Experience of handling sensitive and confidential information - with a clear understanding of safeguarding, data protection, and information sharing protocols, and the ability to exercise sound judgement in deciding when and how information should be shared.
* Commitment to professional development - with the ability and willingness to keep up to date with changes in legislation, case law, best practice, and council policies, and to apply learning in day-to-day practice.
* Excellent communication and interpersonal skills - able to build trust and rapport with a wide range of customers and stakeholders, explain complex information clearly, and adapt communication styles to suit diverse audiences.
* Cultural awareness and sensitivity - with the ability to work effectively with people from diverse cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds, including those with limited English or additional support needs.
* Strong IT and digital skills - confident in the use of case management systems, Microsoft Office, online portals, and digital communication tools, with the ability to maintain accurate records and work efficiently in a digital environment.
* Customer focused approach - demonstrating a genuine commitment to delivering excellent public service, ensuring that solutions are appropriate, sustainable, and centred on the needs of each individual household.
* Problem solving and analytical skills - able to assess complex cases, identify risks, develop creative solutions, and make sound, evidence-based decisions.
* Resilience and adaptability - able to work under pressure, respond positively to change, and remain flexible in meeting the needs of the service and customers.
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| **Skills, Abilities and Competencies**  | **Essential*** **Analytical and reporting skills -** ability to use systems to input data and information, interpret findings, and present them clearly in reports.
* **Strong organisational skills -** proven ability to manage a varied caseload, prioritise effectively, and meet competing deadlines with accuracy and attention to detail.
* **Excellent communication skills -** ability to explain complex information in a clear and accessible way, both in writing and verbally, to a wide range of audiences. Managing expectations
* **Effective advocacy and representation -** experience in advocating for customers and making persuasive written and oral representations to statutory bodies, landlords, or partner agencies.
* **Strong interpersonal skills -** ability to establish trust and rapport with vulnerable individuals and families, demonstrating empathy, patience, and professionalism in sensitive or challenging situations.
* **Collaborative working -** ability to work successfully in partnership with internal colleagues, statutory services, and voluntary/community organisations to achieve positive outcomes.
* **Customer service excellence -** a strong commitment to delivering high-quality, customer-focused services that meet individual needs.
* **Problem-solving and decision-making skills -** able to assess complex situations, identify risks, and develop practical solutions under pressure.
* **Resilience and adaptability -** ability to remain calm and flexible when working in high-pressure or changing environments.
* **Digital and IT literacy -** confident in the use of case management systems, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint), and digital communication platforms, with the ability to maintain accurate records.
* **Confidentiality and safeguarding -** sound understanding of GDPR, safeguarding protocols, and professional boundaries when handling sensitive information.

**Desirable*** **Knowledge application -** ability to apply in-depth knowledge of welfare benefits, housing legislation, and national resettlement schemes (e.g. Homes for Ukraine, Afghan/Syrian Resettlement).
* **Cultural awareness and sensitivity -** competence in working effectively with people from diverse cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds, including refugees and newly arrived communities.
* **Experience of outreach work -** delivering services in a range of settings such as homes, hostels, prisons, or hospitals.
* **Continuous professional development -** commitment to ongoing learning and keeping up to date with welfare, housing, asylum, and resettlement policy, and sharing knowledge with colleagues and stakeholders.
* Additional language - spoken and written.
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| **Specific Working Requirements** | * **Valid driving licence (with business insurance cover) -** required to travel independently across the borough and wider region in order to carry out home visits, outreach work, partnership meetings, and attend training or other work-related duties.
* **Flexibility to work outside normal office hours -** including occasional evenings and weekends, to meet service needs, respond to emergencies, attend community events, or represent the Council at meetings as required.
* **Ability to work in varied settings** – including customer homes, hostels, hotels, hospitals, prisons, and community venues, in line with service procedures and safeguarding protocols.
* **Willingness to adapt to changing service demands -** including redeployment within the wider housing and resettlement team to ensure continuity of service delivery.
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| **OTHER/SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**  |
| **DBS check required for this role** | Basic |
| **Is this role “politically restricted”?** | No |
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| **ADDITIONAL JOB DETAILS** |
| **Job Grade** | Grade 6 |
| **Directorate** | Place |
| **Service Area** | Housing  |