

Job Description

Post	Housing Options Officer	Department	Housing
Salary Grade	M1	Salary Range	£28,222 to £32,207
Hours	8.30 – 5pm	Location	Pippbrook
Reports to	Housing Options Manager		

Post Objective

Provide comprehensive housing advice and assistance in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, to prevent or delay homelessness and promote a range of housing options. Assess and make decisions on applications from homeless people under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002. Ensure the service provided is focused on the customer and meets their needs.

Main Duties

1. Participate in the housing options duty system to deal with frontline enquiries and in an out of hours rota to cover emergency housing issues, as required.
2. Assist people who are in housing need or who have housing related enquiries in person, by telephone, letter or e-mail.
3. Undertake a full assessment of a customer's housing needs in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, to establish their housing rights, identify their housing options and assist them with accessing these options. Where necessary correspond with third parties to investigate a customer's circumstances. Wherever possible ensure advice is given to delay or prevent homelessness.
4. Visit customers in their home to give advice and discuss their housing options if required.
5. Provide outreach housing options surgeries for customers who are more difficult to engage or who are unable to access the Council's offices in Dorking.
6. Maintain daily comprehensive case work records and ensure customers' housing register applications are kept up to date.
7. Reply to letters, e-mails and telephone calls from customers and external agencies.
8. Take applications from people who are homeless in accordance with Part VII 1996 Housing Act, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, investigate, make decisions and explain applicants' rights.
9. Ensure homeless applicants are provided with emergency accommodation if appropriate.
10. Refer customers who need support to appropriate agencies, eg. CAB, solicitors, Children Services, tenancy support services, Probation, Youth Justice and Community

Mental Health Recovery Team. Work with these agencies, as required.

11. Draft and revise housing options procedure notes, leaflets and the website as required by the Housing Options Manager.
12. Represent the Council at meetings as necessary.
13. Ensure that the Council's corporate standards are met for customer care and equality.
14. Be aware of the Council's policy on Risk Management and to escalate any new, emerging or potential risks to the post holder's line manager
15. Work in accordance with the Council's commitment to provide a healthy and safe working environment including the promotion and implementation of health and safety policies and procedures.
16. Collect relevant data and statistics. Complete government and internal returns, as required. Ensure that all necessary data is provided in an accurate, reliable and timely manner, and is fit for purpose in accordance with the Council's Data Quality Policy.
17. Carry out such duties as may be required by your manager as appropriate to the post.

Housing Options Officer



Person Specification

	Essential
Experience and Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ability to demonstrate an understanding of housing and homelessness legislation.• Experience of working in housing or a similar role in either the voluntary, statutory or private sector• Experience of dealing with vulnerable clients• Substantial experience of giving housing advice and assistance to a variety of households• Experience of processing and making decisions on homeless applications.• A knowledge of the benefits system• Experience of dealing with people in difficult circumstances• Experience of assessing and resettling households

<p>Education and Qualifications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 A-C GCSE's including Maths and English
<p>Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to relate to households from a variety of backgrounds • Excellent verbal and written communication skills • Ability to negotiate with differing perspectives • Good negotiation skills • Ability to work on own initiative and with minimum supervision • The ability to diffuse situations • Good effective time management • Good IT skills • Proven record keeping experience
<p>Special Aptitudes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self Motivated • Ability to deal with vulnerable people in a non-judgemental way • Ability to prioritise tasks and manage workload effectively • Ability to work as part of a team • Ability to problem solve when under pressure • Ability to be assertive whilst retaining diplomacy
<p>Job Requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DBS check • Access to a vehicle • Ability to work flexibly and respond to out of hours calls • Full driving licence • Requirement to attend meetings which may be elsewhere in Surrey (i.e. Safeguarding meetings)