

## Folkestone & Hythe District Council Job Description

JOB DETAILS	
<b>Job Title</b>	Private Sector Housing Officer
<b>Service Area / Team</b>	Housing and Operations / Private Sector Housing
<b>Reports to</b>	Private Sector Housing Team Leader
<b>Post Number</b>	HG042
<b>Grade &amp; Annual Salary</b>	E/F (subject to competency framework)
<b>Politically Restricted Post</b>	No
<b>DBS Requirement</b>	Standard

JOB PURPOSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To carry out the Private Sector Housing team's work to improve the conditions and standards of management of private sector housing as required by statute and the policies of Central Government and the Council.</li> </ul>

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	Frequency (daily/weekly/ monthly/annually etc)
<b>Response to complaints about Housing Conditions</b>	
To respond to complaints from tenants about poor housing conditions.	Daily
To provide advice and guidance to landlords, tenants, managing agents and owner occupiers in relation to the improvement of housing in the district.	Daily
To advise landlords, tenants and owner occupiers on their statutory rights, obligations and duties and to advise landlords on how to develop best practice and comply with legislation.	Daily
To advise landlords, tenants and owner occupiers about financial assistance available to deal with housing repairs, renovation and disabled adaptations.	Daily
To refer eligible customers to the appropriate agency to initiate the application for a grant or loan.	As required
To carry out inspections, investigations and detailed surveys of private sector residences in response to enquiries from the occupants.	Daily

To hazard assess properties using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), (a system prescribed under Housing Act 2004).	Weekly (can take anything from 3hrs to a couple of days)
To interpret the results of the HHSRS assessment and decide on an appropriate course of action to deal with each hazard identified.	Daily
To record the results of the assessment and site notes on Northgate's M3 system with accuracy and appropriate detail.	Daily
To write reports, detailed schedules of work and letters to inform the landlord about works required or actions to be taken to comply with The Housing Act 2004, the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and other relevant pieces of legislation and guidance.	Daily
To draft appropriate, accurate and articulate enforcement notices which give clear instruction to the recipient and are not open to interpretation and follow statute. To serve the notices according to the legislation and guidance and in accordance with the level of delegated authority given to the post holder.	As required
To monitor the progress of any improvements, changes, raising of standards, which occur as a result of previous inspections and action. To negotiate with the landlord regarding timescales for completing remedial works and methods for carrying out these works.	Daily
To take appropriate enforcement and prosecution action as required and within the authorisations delegated to the post holder. This involves revisiting the property to gather evidence (notes and photographs) to establish whether an offence has been committed, interviewing the offender under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act conditions (recorded interviews), preparing a case for Legal Services to take to court, writing a witness statement and gathering statements from any other witnesses, attending court to give evidence.	As required
<b>Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)</b>	
To identify and inspect houses in multiple occupation and ensure that they are licensed in accordance with the mandatory licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (under the Housing Act 2004).	As required
To provide advice and guidance to owners, prospective owners and managers of HMOs about the standards and legislation relevant to HMOs. (Includes Housing Act, Housing and Planning Act 2016, Management Regulations and fire safety legislation)	Daily
To process mandatory HMO license applications (which involves reviewing the application form, applying guidance and standards to determine whether the property is suitable to be used as an HMO, visiting the premises, inspecting under HHSRS and measuring rooms, processing the payment of the licence fee, and recording details on Northgate M3 system. To follow up on any remedial works necessary (involving taking enforcement action where necessary).	As required (when applications are received – each application is renewed every five years)
To draft and serve the relevant notices and licenses at proposed and formal stages (within the timescales set down in legislation)	As required

To keep the public register (statutory requirement) of HMO licenses up to date and ensure that licenses that are due to expire are renewed.	As required
To ensure that non-licensable HMOs are compliant with HMO management standards and regulations and are free from hazards.	Daily
<b>Fire Safety</b>	
To identify and inspect the common parts of buildings which have been converted into or are purpose built self contained flats and ensure that they meet the appropriate standards for means of escape in case of fire and other fire precautions	Daily
To liaise with freeholders, leaseholders and tenants of converted and purpose built blocks of flats to ensure that the appropriate fire safety measures are installed. (this includes hard wired fire alarm systems, emergency lighting, upgrading of doors and partitions and fire fighting equipment).	Daily
To draft detailed schedules of work (using the statutory guidance and relevant British Standards) to bring converted and purpose built blocks of flats up to the required fire safety standard.	As required
To take appropriate enforcement action (by service of notice, prosecution and/or organising works to be carried out in default) to ensure that converted and purposed built blocks of flats have adequate means of escape in case of fire and other fire precautions.	As required
To consult with Kent Fire and rescue Service when determining the appropriate fire safety measures for all residences.	As required
To enforce the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide regulations within private rented properties (which includes carrying out works in default and serving fix penalty notices of up to £5000).	As required
To keep up to date on current specifications of fire warning systems and emergency lighting and how to identify the correct standard of installation.	Ongoing
<b>Filthy and Verminous Premises</b>	
To respond to complaints from members of the public or external agencies (including mental health teams, GPs, social workers, voluntary sector) regarding filthy and verminous premises (involving vulnerable occupants).	As required
To liaise with agencies or volunteer sector workers and the occupant's family in order to assist the occupants of a filthy and verminous property to clear and cleanse the property as necessary.	As required
To take appropriate enforcement action to clear and cleanse filthy and verminous premises where there is no prospect of doing so with the occupant's consent and where the health of the occupant is at risk or the property is causing a nuisance to neighbouring occupants.	As required
<b>Empty Homes</b>	

To take targeted action to identify and bring empty homes back into use.	Daily
To review, inspect and prioritise empty and derelict residential buildings so as to develop a programme of action which tackles dereliction by targeting on a “worst first” basis.	Daily
To maximise the impact of monies committed to empty property activity including securing external funding wherever possible	Daily
To support and liaise with other Council departments involved in targeting empty homes and bringing them back into use.	As required
To develop and maintain Folkestone & Hythe’s register of Empty Homes.	Monthly
To produce schedules of dilapidation and specifications of work.	As required
To take action to secure empty and derelict properties against further entry by intruders. This may involve liaising with the owner of the property and serving a notice to board up the property. Where necessary, to arrange for works in default to be carried out.	As required
To liaise with and encourage private developers and affordable housing provider partners to become actively involved in the refurbishment or redevelopment of empty/derelict property.	As required
To maintain and attend a contact network (forum) so as to maximise cross organisational activity on empty homes (other Kent Local Authorities, Kent County Council and Housing Associations).	Quarterly
To be a point of contact for Ward members and the portfolio holder for Housing in respect of Empty Homes queries and complaints.	As required
<b>Illegal evictions</b>	
To investigate and gather evidence in relation to reported cases of tenant harassment and illegal eviction and take appropriate action to assist the tenant in maintaining their rights under Housing legislation.	As required
<b>Statutory Nuisances (Environmental Protection Act 1990)</b>	
To investigate complaints from neighbouring occupiers who are experiencing a nuisance caused by the poor condition of property.	As required
To liaise with the neighbour to draw their attention to the nuisance and advise them of how to abate the nuisance	As required
To take enforcement action (which may involve service of notices, taking prosecution action and/or carrying out works in default) if the nuisance cannot be abated by using an informal approach.	As required
<b>Planning applications</b>	
To respond to consultation requests from the planning department on planning applications for residential premises. Provide the appropriate guidance and advice using housing legislation, guidance and standards.	As required
<b>Inspections for Housing Options Team</b>	
To carry out inspections of properties to be used by the Housing Options Team for Emergency Accommodation or for discharging their duties into private rented sector.	As required
To report the presence or absence of hazards to the Housing Options Manager or Team Leader in order that they can make an informed decision whether to use the accommodation.	As required

To follow up on remedial works required and ensure that any hazards found are addressed by the landlord prior to tenants moving into the property.	As required
To promote the work of ABC Lettings to landlords where possible.	As required
<b>Immigration inspections</b>	
To respond to a request for an immigration inspection. To arrange for payment of inspection fee (collection of cheque or by telephone card payment) and to process the payment.	As required
To carry out the inspection and write a letter for the Home Office, detailing the layout of the property, whether there are any hazards present and to confirm that the property will or will not be suitable to house the visa applicant.	As required
To follow up on any deficiencies found by liaising with the owner, which may result in enforcement action.	As required
<b>Grants and Loans</b>	
To accompany the Home Improvement Agency's Surveyor on final inspections of disabled adaptations or Home Improvement Loan completion inspections and report back to the Private Sector Housing Team Leader.	As required
To provide guidance and support to the Home Improvement Agency in the carrying out of financial assessments for Disabled Facilities Grants, using the Northgate Ferret Computer System	As required
<b>General Duties</b>	
To assist the Private Sector Housing Team Leader to set and maintain appropriate standards of professional performance and conduct and safe working practices.	Monthly
To attend meetings with peers, Councillors, Officers, other professionals/organisations and the public, as required or directed.	As required
To actively participate in landlord and tenant engagement events (e.g. Landlord Forum).	As required
To keep up to date with legislation and guidance and maintain comprehensive knowledge of the law and policy options relevant to the field of work.	Ongoing

## **CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Adhere to the council's safeguarding policies and procedures and undertake relevant training in order to help protect children and vulnerable adults within the district.
- To comply with legislation, council policies and procedures including the Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act, Information Security Policy, the Code of Conduct for Officers and to participate in any Emergency Planning activities as required.
- To actively demonstrate the values and behaviours of the council.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure our customers are valued by taking into account their views and needs in all that we do.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To contribute to the development and achievement of relevant corporate and service objectives by suggesting ideas for service improvements.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To communicate openly and honestly with colleagues, members and customers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To undergo any training necessary to be able to fulfil the requirements of the job.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To carry out other duties commensurate with the grade, skills, experience and qualifications of the post holder as directed and as may be required from time to time.</li> </ul>

<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Responsibility for Staff (direct reports)</b>	n/a
<b>Responsibility for Staff (indirect reports)</b>	n/a
<b>Financial / Budgetary Accountability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Overall Accountability/control (£ value)</b></li> <li><b>Directly Managed (£ value)</b></li> <li><b>Income Generation (£ value)</b></li> </ul>	n/a n/a Responsible for carrying out: Immigration inspections £1500 per year. HMO licensing £2500 per year. Smoke alarm enforcement – fixed penalty (unknown as new legislation, but each fine is £2500 to £5000). Penalty Charge notices up to £30,000 per offence (offence calculation framework applies)
<b>Responsibility for Physical Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Vehicles / Equipment / Tools</b></li> <li><b>Information Systems</b></li> <li><b>Buildings / External Locations</b></li> <li><b>Maintenance</b></li> <li><b>Stocks / Supplies / Procurement</b></li> </ul>	Responsible for laptop and mobile phone. Responsible for damp and sound meters. PACE notebooks (to be kept secure at all times and to store used books in a safe location). Responsible for updating inspection details and ratings on

	M3/salesforce accurately and maintaining confidentiality and in accordance with data protection and Freedom Of Information laws.
<b>Responsibility for Service Contracts</b>	n/a

<b>The numerical measures in the role</b>
<b>Financial</b>
Income generation through immigration inspections, HMO licensing, penalties and fines for enforcement activity as above.
<b>Non-financial</b>
Recommending clients for home improvement loans, empty home loans and disabled facilities grants (115 clients per year on average).
Folkestone & Hythe private housing stock (40,000 properties).
In excess of 250 properties improved per annum.
70 Empty Homes brought back into use per annum.

<b>NATURE OF CONTACTS</b>	
<b>Internal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colleagues/peers</li> <li>• Managers</li> <li>• Members</li> <li>• Corporate Leadership Team and Heads of Service</li> </ul>
<b>External</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landlords</li> <li>• Tenants and home owners</li> <li>• Border enforcement officers/Home Office</li> <li>• Letting agents/block managers</li> <li>• Landlord associations</li> <li>• Fire alarm companies</li> <li>• Electricians</li> <li>• Building contractors</li> <li>• Police</li> <li>• Voluntary and third sector agencies e.g. Age UK, Porchlight, Shelter, Citizens Advice Bureau</li> <li>• Kent Fire and Rescue Service</li> <li>• Housing Associations</li> <li>• Architects/Surveyors</li> <li>• Social workers/Mental Health workers</li> <li>• Care Navigators/Advocates/Health &amp; Housing Co-ordinators/Home Straight Co-ordinators</li> </ul>

## Progression in Role

- **Starting – the required related knowledge / skills / qualifications and experience required at selection**

A-C Maths and English GCSE, Level 2 literacy and numeracy (or equivalents) or recent and relevant experience that demonstrates proficiency in English and Maths.

At least 2 years experience of working in a housing, construction or building surveying related role.

HND/HNC or equivalent in Environmental Health, Building Surveying or Housing related subject

- **Induction – what initial induction / training is required to become proficient in this role?**

During the first few weeks of employment the post holder will be expected to follow the basic corporate induction framework, attend the next available formal corporate induction session and complete any departmental induction requirements.

In addition, the post holder will need to learn and follow the complaints processing and enforcement procedures, learn how to use Northgate M3/salesforce and Civica, start to learn the legislation and guidance and know how to refer to legislation and apply the guidance to daily scenarios. The post holder must also start to build up their own caseload to the expected manageable level and prioritise cases and manage their time accordingly. They will book their own visits and manage their own workflow.

- **Proficient – how would this be displayed in the role?**

Please refer to the core competency frame work at the end of this job description. This details competencies for each level (grade) within the two grade system.

- **Advanced – what additional characteristics will be displayed?**

The post holder should be able to actively contribute to the improvement of the processes and procedures in place in order to increase customer satisfaction.

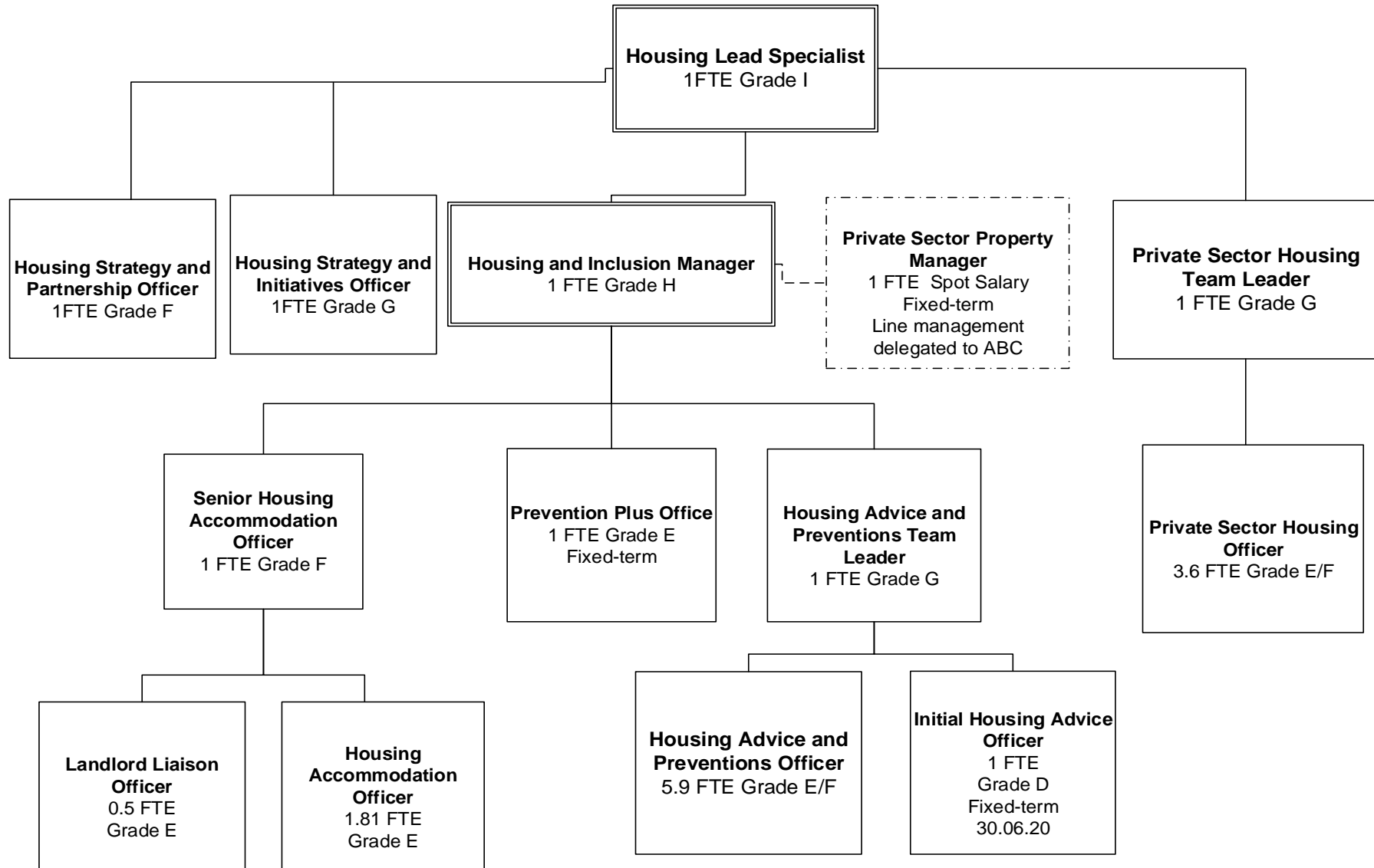
To volunteer to take on and lead on specific projects.

The post holder volunteers to cover meetings for managers and peers in their absence.

Active engagement with the customer to discover their expectations of our service and suggesting ideas and implementing improvement based on their feedback



# Organisation Chart



## Folkestone & Hythe District Council Person Specification

### Post Title: Private Sector Housing Officer

<b>Important Information for Applicants:</b>				
The criteria listed in this person specification are the requirements for the post. Where the method of assessment is stated to be the application form, your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. <b>If you do not address these criteria fully, you may not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.</b>				
Factors	Criteria	Means of Assessment		
		Application	Interview	Test
Qualifications	<b>Essential</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A – C Maths and English GCSE, Level 2 literacy and numeracy (or equivalents) or recent and relevant experience that demonstrates proficiency in English and Maths.</li> <li>HNC/HND or equivalent in Environmental Health, Housing, Construction/Building or Surveying or two years recent and relevant experience in a Housing or constructions service.</li> </ul>	✓		
	<b>Desirable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant attendance to a recognised training course for the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and obtained Certification to show competency to assess under this system – for example the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health’s HHSRS Practitioners Course (2 day with assessment and certificate).</li> </ul>	✓		
Experience and Knowledge	<b>Essential</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recent and relevant experience of operating MS Office systems such as Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook.</li> <li>Recent and relevant experience of working within a customer focused environment.</li> <li>Knowledge of Housing, Health and Safety Rating System and the Housing Act 2004.</li> <li>One year’s recent and relevant experience in dealing with environmental health or housing matters.</li> </ul>	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	

	<b>Desirable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of using Northgate M3/salesforce.</li> <li>• Recent and relevant experience in dealing with environmental health or housing matters, including statutory nuisances and filthy and verminous premises.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	
<b>Skills and Abilities</b>	<b>Essential</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability to work as part of a team</li> <li>▪ Ability to operate on own initiative with minimal supervision</li> <li>▪ Excellent written and oral communication skills</li> <li>▪ High level of attention to detail and accuracy</li> <li>▪ Competent user of IT, particularly Microsoft Office</li> <li>▪ Proactive and committed to continued service and personal development</li> <li>▪ Ability to adapt and proactively organise and prioritise work effectively in order to meet deadlines and maintain high standards at all times.</li> <li>▪ Ability to demonstrate a professional and customer orientated approach</li> <li>▪ Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to operate and build excellent working relationships at all levels</li> <li>▪ Ability to travel around the district and to customers' homes as required in an efficient and effective manner</li> <li>▪ Ability to negotiate and compromise where appropriate</li> </ul>	✓	✓	
	<b>Desirable</b>			

## Core Competency Framework for Private Sector Housing Officers

Housing Improvement Officer – Level One	Housing Improvement Officer – Level 2
<p>To be able to communicate effectively both verbally and in all written communication, ensuring customers are responded to politely and all problems dealt with in a professional manner on most occasions.</p>	<p>To be able to communicate effectively both verbally and in all written communication, ensuring customers are responded to politely and all problems dealt with in a professional manner consistently and occasionally exceeds targets.</p>
<p>To be able to co-operate effectively and flexibly as part of a team by actively helping others and supporting other team members.</p>	<p>To be able to co-operate effectively and flexibly as part of a team by actively building team spirit, helping others and supporting other team members consistently and occasionally exceeding targets.</p>
<p>To be able to utilise and maximise IT systems using Microsoft Office applications including Word, Excel, Outlook and Explorer to a satisfactory level to undertake the duties of the job.</p>	<p>To be able to utilise and maximise IT systems using Microsoft Office applications including Word, Excel, Outlook and Explorer to a satisfactory level to undertake the duties of the job in a proficient and effective manner, ensuring all duties are performed in a professional and timely manner.</p>
<p>Commitment to undertake and complete relevant training courses</p>	<p>Commitment to undertake any other relevant training courses as requested</p>
<p>Have passed one of a Higher National Certificate (HNC) or Ordinary National Certificate (ONC) in Environmental Health, Housing or Construction/Building, Higher National</p>	<p>Have passed one of a Higher National Certificate (HNC) or Ordinary National Certificate (ONC) in Environmental</p>

<p>Diploma (HND) or Ordinary National Diploma (OND) in Environmental Health, Housing or Construction/Building, BTec in Construction, or equivalent Qualification</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>To have a minimum of 2 years relevant employment experience in a Construction-related or Local Authority arena.</p>	<p>Health, Housing or Construction/Building, Higher National Diploma (HND) or Ordinary National Diploma (OND) in Environmental Health, Housing or Construction/Building, BTec in Construction, or equivalent Qualification</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>To have a minimum of 2 years relevant employment experience in a Construction-related or Local Authority arena.</p>
	<p>To have attended a recognised training course for the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and obtained Certification to show competency to assess Properties by using this system.</p>
	<p>To have attended recognised courses for the Enforcement of the HHSRS, Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing and Fire Safety.</p>
	<p>To have, within the two year period, been the case officer for 4 Improvement Notices, 2 Emergency Actions (1 Prohibition Notice, and 1 Emergency Remedial Action), 2 HMO Licensing applications, 1 Filthy and Verminous property, 1 Emergency Boarding-up. If the post holder has been unable to demonstrate competency on any of the above within the two year period by evidence from actual cases, it will be acceptable to provide properly documented model case examples.</p>

**Notes**

1. These competencies have been designed to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound).

2. All competencies at each level must be achieved.
3. It is the responsibility of the post holder to demonstrate to the Housing Strategy Manager by a written statement supported by the Line Manager (if appropriate) that that all core competencies have been met.
4. The Private Sector Housing Team Leader will advise the Housing Strategy Manager, who together with the Head of Service will decide if the core competencies have been met and that the post holder can advance to level 2.
5. This core Competency Framework does not remove the post holder's rights under the Job Evaluation Scheme.
6. The core Competency Framework will be kept under review.
7. All officers at the higher grade will be expected to maintain a level of competence through regular refresher training and demonstrating experience which will be monitored through the PPR process.