

# Job Description and Person Specification

## Accommodation Officer

Job Details	
Grade	5
Service	Housing and Homelessness
Location	Friargate
Job Evaluation Code	Y5185

Coventry City Council Values
<p>We expect everyone who works for us to be committed to our One Coventry values and to share our commitment to becoming a more diverse and inclusive organisation:</p> <p><b>Open and fair:</b> We are open, fair and transparent.</p> <p><b>Nurture and develop:</b> We encourage a culture where everyone is supported to do and be the best they can be.</p> <p><b>Engage and empower:</b> We engage with our residents and empower our employees to enable them to do the right thing.</p> <p><b>Create and innovate:</b> We embrace new ways of working to continuously improve the services we offer.</p> <p><b>Own and be accountable:</b> We work together to make the right decisions and deliver the best services for our residents.</p> <p><b>Value and respect:</b> We put diversity and inclusion at the heart of all we do.</p>

## Job Purpose

To source suitable and cost-effective accommodation to meet the needs of the service for temporary accommodation for homeless households.

To work closely with private sector landlords to negotiate and secure suitable, affordable accommodation to be used to discharge duty and to meet the requirements for temporary accommodation.

To develop partnerships with internal and external stakeholders and providers to take full advantage of joint working opportunities to deliver accommodation.

To be a single point of contact for landlords and promote the service with landlords, agents, and other providers as part of the team.

To visit households where there is a threat of homelessness and to provide a responsive, solution-focused visiting service that assists the Council's housing and homeless service with investigations of homelessness applications, determining the circumstances of housing applicants and, via intervention and mediation, minimise the number of households that are made homeless.

To visit households in temporary accommodation to ensure occupancy, resolve ASB issues, identify where occupiers require additional support, to move households out of or between temporary accommodation and to work closely with private sector landlords to negotiate tenants remaining in their homes.

To have a one Coventry approach to problem solving and collaboration between different services, organisations and work towards the services aim of having no household in bed and breakfast accommodation.

## Main Duties & Key Accountabilities

### Core Knowledge

To work closely with landlords and providers to secure properties to meet the housing needs of the households under the Housing and Homelessness duties, whether for temporary or permanent accommodation

Negotiate with Landlords regarding the condition of the property. If ready to let, to undertake the inspection in line with the required Coventry City Council standard. The prescribed inspection regime must be followed as a guide to this process. Training will be provided if required.

To confirm landlords have provided all the required documentation ahead of entering into the tenancy agreement with the household. This will include the receipting of appropriate and in date gas, electrical and energy performance certificates.

To maintain a log of the properties used on IT systems, especially where financial assistance has been provided by the Council to track the type of accommodation, usage for reporting. Training on systems will be provided if required.

Negotiate rental values with landlords to reduce the pressure between the housing benefits used to meet temporary accommodation costs and the amount the authority can claim back as housing subsidy. For private rented accommodation, secure affordable rents close to local housing allowance limits.

Where financial assistance has been provided to support a household to secure a tenancy, to continue to engage with the household to ensure actions are in place to support individuals in maintaining the tenancy going forward without any further financial intervention.

To maintain a record of the property requirements for temporary and permanent accommodation and work to secure properties to meet these needs.

Working closely with the officers in Housing and homelessness and Housing Benefits, to utilise the financial resources and assistance available through the Prevention Pot and other funding sources e.g. Housing Benefit application, Discretionary Housing Payments, to negotiate contracts with the private rented sector. To monitor claims and assist customers getting Housing Benefit claims into payment where required.

To invoice customers and monitor payments in line with Coventry City Councils charging policy

To work closely with other teams in the Council to understand wider property requirements from other service areas and to learn lessons/ share best practice in relation to engagement with landlords and other property agents.

To work closely with the local authority liaison officers in the Migration Service to streamline the process for securing accommodation when a household has been granted leave to remain and has been given notice on their National Asylum Support Service accommodation
To lead on landlord liaison working and focus groups to build positive working relationships with private rented sector and seek out creative opportunities for joint working
Act as an intermediary between landlord and tenant if disputes arise to try and reach a settlement, enabling the tenant to remain in the property
To lead on the management and monitoring of the private rented sector schemes and property leasing schemes once developed and in place. To ensure the appropriate contracts are in place and initiate payments as required in line with the relevant scheme.
Input and retrieve data from the service areas designated ICT systems to assist with the collation, monitoring, and reporting of statistical information for the purposes of performance management, returns to Central Government and information for other agencies including those internal to the organisation as appropriate
To visit households where there is a threat of homelessness, undertake follow-up visits and casework where required, ensuring that all cases are actively managed and monitored for as long as the officer is continuing to work with the applicant
To visit households in temporary accommodation to ensure occupancy, resolve ASB issues, identify where occupiers require additional support, to move households out of or between temporary accommodation, to serve notices/letters where appropriate and to work closely with private sector landlords to negotiate tenants remaining in their homes
Provide applicants with comprehensive advice and information on the full range of housing options available to them, taking into account their needs and aspirations, their eligibility for assistance under the relevant housing or homeless legislation, their priority on the housing register and their ability to sustain private rented accommodation
To undertake viewings and signups to properties either, Temporary or Private sector, to conduct pre letting inspections.
Any other duties and responsibilities within the range of the salary grade.

Key Relationships			
External:	Commissioned and non-commissioned Services.  NHS  Probation	Internal:	Facilities Management  Rough Sleeper Team  Adult Social Care  Children's Services

Standard Information
<p>Post holders will be accountable for carrying out all duties and responsibilities with due regard to Code of Conduct, Safeguarding, Health &amp; Safety and the City Council's Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Policies.</p> <p>Duties which include processing of any personal data must be undertaken within the corporate data protection guidelines.</p> <p><b>Training</b></p> <p>The postholder must attend any training and undertake any development activities that are identified as mandatory/beneficial to their role.</p>

Responsible for
Staff managed by postholder: N/A

Person Specification	
Requirements	
Knowledge	Knowledge of private rented sector resources including, accommodation, benefits, property standards and relevant documentation for issuing tenancies
Knowledge	Basic knowledge of housing & homeless legislation
Skills And Ability	Good negotiation and influencing skills with the ability to develop effective working relationships at all levels and manage demanding and sometimes difficult relationships with landlords and tenants.

Skills And Ability	Communication skills to communicate with a wide variety of audiences (e.g. customers; housing providers; landlords; colleagues) using a variety of resources
Skills And Ability	ICT skills in using standard software provided (word; excel; Office etc) and skills in inputting and retrieving data accurately to the teams ICT systems
Skills And Ability	Organisational and administrative skills to plan; prioritise and organise workload to meet deadlines when working under pressure
Skills And Ability	Excellent skills and ability to work in a team and with other colleagues and partner organisations
Skills And Ability	Negotiation and advocacy skills to achieve appropriate case outcomes involving customers, landlords, colleagues and other agencies; with the aim of resolving disputes or acceptance of available resources
Experience	Previous experience of working closely with the private rented sector or social landlords
Experience	Experience of working with customer who have housing needs
Qualification	
Special Requirements	This post is exempted under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and as such appointment to this post will be conditional upon the receipt of a satisfactory response to a check of police records via Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Declaration			
Reviewed/Created By:			
Job Title:		Date:	