

Job Description and Person Specification



Coventry City Council



Job Description

Job Title	Accommodation Officer
Grade	5
Service	Housing and Homelessness
Reports to	Housing and Homelessness Manager
Location	Broadgate House
Job Evaluation Code	Y5185



About Coventry City Council

Who we are: At Coventry City Council we are dedicated to making a positive difference to the services we deliver to the diverse citizens of Coventry. The work we do improves people's lives – from helping them into work to providing clean and green places to live, to keeping people safe and protected.

As a Coventry City Council employee, you have our ongoing commitment to your growth and development with opportunities to work across multiple service areas including customer contact, public health prevention and education and skills, adults and children's services and provide support for the most vulnerable.

Our aim is simple – to be globally connected, locally committed, deliver our priorities with fewer resources whilst effectively managing our performance and measuring our progress.

Our Values: 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:



About the Service your team will provide

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

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. To maintain a record of the property requirements for temporary and permanent accommodation and work to secure properties to meet these needs.
8. 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.
9. To invoice customers and monitor payments in line with Coventry City Councils charging policy.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. 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.

16. 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.
 17. 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.
 18. 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.
 19. 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.

The post holder must comply with Coventry City Council's health and safety policy and in particular is required: -

- To take reasonable care for their own health and safety at work and of those who may be affected by their actions or by their omissions
- To cooperate with their line manager and senior management, to work safely, to comply with health and safety instructions and information and undertake appropriate health and safety training as required
- Not to interfere with intentionally or recklessly or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety, and welfare
- To report to their manager any health and safety concerns, hazardous condition or defect in the health and safety arrangements.

Any further Health and Safety responsibilities relevant to this post will be set out in the offer letter and Written Statement of Particulars

The post holder must comply with the Interagency procedures of the Safeguarding Boards and Coventry City Council's policies for safeguarding children and safeguarding adults and in particular is required: -

- To ensure they are aware of the signs that may suggest a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected
- To report to their manager, or other appropriate manager, any concerns they may have that suggest that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused or neglected immediately

Any further Safeguarding Board responsibilities relevant to this post will be set out in the offer letter and Written Statement of Particulars

Post holders will be accountable for carrying out all duties and responsibilities with due regard to the City Council's Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Duties which include processing of any personal data must be undertaken within the corporate data protection guidelines.

Key relationships

External Commissioned and non-commissioned services NHS Probation	Internal Rough Sleeper Team Adult Social care Children services
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Standard information

Post holders will be accountable for carrying out all duties and responsibilities with due regard to Code of Conduct, Safeguarding, Health & Safety and the City Council's Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Policies.

Duties which include processing of any personal data must be undertaken within the corporate data protection guidelines.

Smoke Free

The City Council is Smoke - Free. Smoking is not permitted on any of our premises or the surrounding land including car parking facilities.

Training

The postholder must attend any training that is identified as mandatory to their role.

Responsible for:

Staff managed by postholder:

N/A

Person specification

Job Evaluation Code	Y5185			
Knowledge				
Knowledge of private rented sector resources including, accommodation, benefits, property standards and relevant documentation for issuing tenancies.				
Basic knowledge of housing & homeless legislation				
Skills and Abilities				
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.				
Communication skills to communicate with a wide variety of audiences (e.g. customers; housing providers; landlords; colleagues) using a variety of resources				
ICT skills in using standard software provided (word; excel; Office etc) and skills in inputting and retrieving data accurately to the teams ICT systems.				
Organisational and administrative skills to plan; prioritise and organise workload to meet deadlines when working under pressure.				
Excellent skills and ability to work in a team and with other colleagues and partner organisations.				
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 of working with customer who have housing needs.				
Qualifications				
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).				
Date Created	October 2020		Date Reviewed	May 2021