LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

JOB DESCRIPTION		
Post Title: Housing Officer	**Post No.** G013000539	**Grade:** H
Directorate: Place	**Division:** Housing Options	**Section:** Housing Management & Procurement
Version: 1 **Date agreed: 19/3/2021 (updated with Tower Values)**	**Have JE markings been attached?** **No**	
Responsible to: Team Principal, Housing Management & Procurement **Responsible for: N/A (other than the occasional assisting with inducting new members staff)** **DBS Required? N** **Is the post politically restricted? N** **Is a Travel Allowance Payable? N** **Does this post attract an Essential Car User Allowance? Y**		

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE JOB

1. To assume responsibility for a portfolio of temporary accommodation and its occupants; to ensure providers/ contractors adhere to terms and conditions of the contract and that all accommodation meets Health and Safety standards and Council requirements

2. To ensure that licensees in temporary accommodation abide by the conditions of licence paying particular attention to rental payments, ensuring tenant-like conduct and occupation, taking enforcement action in accordance with procedures and referring complex cases to other specialist Teams as directed.

3. To ensure occupants of temporary accommodation receive appropriate advice on their housing options and support in their efforts to obtain permanent accommodation, referring vulnerable applicants for appropriate

support so they can successfully sustain their accommodation.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To be the first point of contact for own client portfolio in providing a full housing management service to homeless households living temporary accommodation, ensuring regular contact and information from first booking, accompanied viewings and sign-ups, to assistance and support with move on from accommodation.

2. To act as a contact point for landlords in the management and provision of temporary accommodation, ensuring that new properties are added to the property database and relevant sections advised of any new acquisitions; to be responsible for the efficient allocation and letting of temporary accommodation, and ensuring void periods are minimised.

3. To resolve disputes between landlord and tenant, as necessary, including monitoring progress on works, ensuring a timely response to disrepair issues.

4. To ensure customers receive, either directly or through referral to relevant teams/agencies, appropriate advice on their options, providing information in advance of permanent re-housing so that properties are suitable first time round, guiding choice based lettings bidding strategies

5. To be responsible for vetting all properties ensuring that there are no outstanding Environmental Health or tenancy related issues

6. To conduct property inspections, confirming landlord compliance with service standards, and the tenant's occupation of the property and compliance with conditions of licence including advising tenants on tenancy conditions and repairs.

7. To determine which disrepair items are landlord or tenant responsibility, where recharges for works should be applied and those items which are either landlord or Council responsibility; taking appropriate remedial or enforcement action and/or referring to specialist teams as appropriate

8. To provide cover for the Bookings and Allocations Team, other Housing Officers and Accommodation Procurement Officers as required, in accordance with established procedures.

9. To make sure the rehousing and resettlement needs of the customer are clearly established and understood with adequate records provided, having particular regard to the need to support vulnerable households.

10. Prepare and issue pro-forma documentation in accordance with procedures where possession or money judgement is being sought, attending

court and providing evidence as required and carry out subsequent procedures arising from the decision of the Court.

11. To liaise with external bodies as required, including Solicitors, Citizens Advice Bureaux, GPs, landlords, other Local Authorities etc to respond to issues raised including liaison with internal and external agencies to minimise debt, and financial loss to the Council due to fraud or non-occupation.

12. To respond to reports and concerns relating to racial harassment, domestic violence, child and vulnerable adult protection and suspicions of criminal or anti-social activity, by complying with relevant reporting and referral procedures, participation in case conferences as required and making recommendations within the post-holder's sphere of responsibility.

13. To provide information as required to assist the efficient progression of all verbal and written enquiries, complaints, statutory review requests, legal proceedings and other enquiries within the post-holder's sphere of responsibility.

14. To plan and operate programmes for decanting residents from temporary accommodation and to arrange transfers of residents for individual special reasons where appropriate

15. To provide good quality advice to clients and their advocates on income maximisation and debt management. Where appropriate, to provide debt counselling and standard welfare benefits advice to clients, referring to specialist teams as appropriate.

16. Maximise income through the effective monitoring of rent accounts and recovery of current arrears in accordance with procedures or as directed, identifying problems of collection and where appropriate, take remedial action, liaising with Housing Benefits and the DWP to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to arrears management carrying out all the administrative aspects of arrears management and debt recovery promptly, accurately and in line with agreed procedures, practices, targets and financial regulations.

17. To undertake appropriate enforcement action in response to all reports and evidence of breaches of licence conditions, including sub-letting, suspected fraud, failure to maintain the property in accordance with acceptable standards, anti-social behaviour and so on, in accordance with agreed procedures, practices, targets and financial regulations.

18. To contribute to the team plan particularly in regard to improving service standards and cost effectiveness

19. To effectively communicate the Council's duties and policies to relevant stakeholders ensuring that all contact with stakeholders is fully recorded

20. Represent service area both internally and externally as required.

21. Ensure that service information is stored appropriately, public information is readily available and to comply with relevant data protection legislation and Policy

22. Ensure excellent customer service standards are maintained for all relevant client groups and contribute to year on year improvement of those standards

23. Ensure that all enquiries and cases are progressed speedily and efficiently, that set targets are achieved, all information systems are kept fully up to date in accordance with procedures and that statistics and monitoring information are provided as required.

General Terms

- To maintain personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the job and participate in appropriate training/development activities including the council's performance, development and review scheme.

- Ensure that all duties and responsibilities are discharged in accordance with the council's policies and procedures, Code of Conduct and relevant regulations and legislation. To comply with the council's equal opportunities and diversity policies ensuring anti-discriminatory practice within the service area.

- This job description is a guide to the level and range of responsibilities you will be expected to undertake. It may be changed from time to time to reflect changing circumstances and demands. As directed, you will undertake additional duties and responsibilities that may arise from time to time commensurate with the grade of the post.

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SPECIAL TERMS AND CONSIDERATIONS

This post qualifies for an essential car user allowance and post-holders are normally expected to have a car available and insured for business use.

Person Specification for the Post of	**Essential (E) or**	**Method of Assessment**

		Desirable (D) (if applicable)	A= Application Form T= Test I= Interview
Knowledge	An understanding of the duties owed to customers threatened with homelessness/actual homelessness under relevant legislation	E	A/I
	An awareness of the services available to customers seeking help and accommodation provided by other organisations, both statutory and voluntary, including those beyond housing such as health & well-being, employment & education	D	I
	Knowledge of relevant Landlord and Tenant Legislation, Family and Immigration law, welfare and housing benefits; knowledge of the Children Act and Community Care Act, and associated case law as they relate to the Council's duties to homeless households.	E	T/I
	Good knowledge of the Housing Benefits system and general knowledge of wider welfare benefits available to tenants and customers	E	A/T/I
	Knowledge of the principles and processes of managing rent accounts	E	A/T/I
	The ability to undertake a range of housing management functions in accordance with established procedures	E	A/I

	Appreciation of the differing needs of customers who face sometimes difficult and stressful situations	E	I
	The ability to undertake a range of processes and procedures involving workflow systems and maintenance of database information	E	A/I
Qualifications & Experience	Demonstrable experience of working with customers giving advice within a housing or similar service	E	A/I
	Good standards of literacy and numeracy	E	A/T
	Experience of working in a demanding environment with the general public	E	A/I
	Experience of managing a housing patch or caseload covering at least one of the following areas: • Tenancy management • Property management • Income management	E	A/I
	Experience of working with databases,	E	A/I
	Experience of working with document management and workflow systems	D	A/I
Living the TOWER Values sets out the essential behaviours required of all staff. **They are aligned to the organisation's five TOWER Values**			
We work **TOGETHER** across boundaries and with partners to achieve the best outcomes for Tower Hamlets	Seeks opportunities to build positive relationships with people from other teams and partners.	D	I
	Builds networks with key teams they work with, to ensure they achieve the best outcomes.	E	A/I

	Shares information and engages others in a timely way to achieve the best outcomes	E	I
We are **OPEN** and transparent	Uses effective listening and questioning techniques to understand the needs of others and act accordingly. Seeks to develop own resilience to manage change, seeking support where necessary.	D D	I I
We are **WILLING** to challenge, innovate and be accountable	Takes accountability for delivering own work, setting challenging goals for self. Seeks to learn from, both failures and successes, to improve how they do things where required.	D D	I I
We empower each other to be **EXCELLENT** and go the extra mile	Understands the organisations direction of travel and actively supports that in their work and interactions. Supports others to achieve a work-life balance and makes time for others when they need someone to listen to them.	D D	I I
We **RESPECT** all communities, they are the heart of everything we do	Actively listens to customers and takes steps to making things better for customers. Shares customer feedback as appropriate to improve the customer experience. Open-minded and appreciates alternative cultural perspectives, taking it into account when delivering service.	E D E	I I I
Additional Requirements	Current driving licence and vehicle available for work Travelling outside of London to carry out home visits as and when required	D E	