



## **Rough Sleeping Outreach Worker**

**Salary:** Band 5 - £26,473 - £28,239 p.a. plus 7.5% shift allowance

**Hours per week:** 37 on a rota basis

**Location:** Rough Sleeping Hub, Portsmouth

**Contract type:** 1 x permanent & 1 x Fixed Term Contract/Secondment for 2 years

### **The Service:**

Portsmouth City Council's Housing Needs Advice & Support (HNAS) team works directly with customers to help deal with housing issues and prevent homelessness in the city. We are a busy front-line service dealing with customers who may be vulnerable and facing homelessness. We give advice, work to prevent homelessness, assist people to resolve their housing need and make assessments of housing and support needs in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Housing Act 1996 and Portsmouth City Council's Allocations Policy. We are committed to excellent customer service, and to listening to and understanding our customers' circumstances, and working collaboratively with them to identify housing solutions.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting good practice and all employees are required to adhere to internal safeguarding policies.

Getting somewhere to live isn't the end of the support needed for some of those individuals; indeed for many of them, it is just the beginning. You'll play a crucial role in preventing and relieving homelessness for the customers of our service. This approach to supporting customers facing homeless situations is underpinned by Portsmouth City Council's Homelessness Strategy for 2024-29. We are committed to excellent customer service, and to listening to and understanding our customers' circumstances, and working collaboratively with them to identify housing solutions.

### **What is the role?**

The Rough Sleeping Outreach team provides a vital service in Portsmouth to support and engage with people who may have become homeless and have resorted to sleeping rough in the city.

The Outreach team goes out at different times of day, including early in the morning, to look for people sleeping rough and to help them away from the streets. The team's priority is to seek to engage with rough sleepers and check their immediate health and wellbeing, gather information about their situation, and provide further advice, support and signposting to appropriate services in the city - including Portsmouth City Council's Rough Sleeping Hub in Queen Street.

People who have slept rough might find it hard to trust others because of negative experiences; it's crucial to build up trust and get to know people individually. Rough Sleeping Outreach Workers will therefore take a person-centred and trauma-informed approach to working with any individuals who may be rough sleeping, and make use of the strong partnerships with other organisations in Portsmouth to help them access accommodation and support, such as physical and mental health services, drug and alcohol services, legal support and advocacy.



Reporting to the Senior Rough Sleeping Outreach Worker, you will be part of a small team which will provide the Rough Sleeping Outreach service within the city. The team will manage a caseload of clients who are known to be sleeping rough in Portsmouth. These cases are likely to require a range of interventions as part of a tailored package of support which could include assisting with benefit claims, GP registrations, exploring housing options and engaging in recovery support for addiction.

The Rough Sleeping Outreach service is operational seven days a week, including bank holidays, and accordingly you will work on a rota that enables this level of provision.

You will develop positive and trusting relationships with rough sleeping clients, supporting them to identify and access appropriate services. It will be crucial for you to maintain professional boundaries with the people you support, who may be difficult to engage with, whilst at the same time being approachable and working in a collaborative and person-centred way with them.

You will be required to respond to referrals from internal and external agencies, members of the public, the Street Link app and to rough sleepers who self-present to the service, engaging with them to improve their health, safety and wellbeing including addressing mental health and substance misuse issues.

You will also build positive working relationships with partner agencies and will be able to evidence excellent multi-agency working to ensure best outcomes for the service users you support. You must have experience of effectively managing a caseload and be able to assess and work with the holistic needs of a rough sleeping client. You will act as a lead professional when required and contribute to multi agency rough sleeping meetings.

At all times, you will promote the health, safety and wellbeing of both your colleagues and the service users you support, ensuring that any identified risks or safeguarding concerns are acted upon promptly and in accordance with service policies and procedures.

The role involves making and keeping accurate client records on a database and capturing information to enable data performance monitoring. You will also need to keep up to date with changes in policies and procedures, both sharing and following good practice.

### **General requirements:**

Postholders will be expected to be flexible in their duties and carry out any other duties commensurate with the banding and falling into the general scope of the role as requested by the Head of HNAS and senior management team.

Duties and responsibilities must be carried out in accordance with the relevant Portsmouth City Council policies and procedures within legislation and any code of professional ethics of relevant professional body.

All employees are expected to maintain a high standard of customer care in the context of the council's core values to uphold the Equality and Diversity Policy and health and safety standards and to participate in personal learning and development necessary to the post.

This is a full-time position. You will be expected to work flexibly at times that meet the needs of the client group, and on a staff rota that ensures consistent and high quality service provision 365 days per year. **This will include some early mornings, evenings, weekends and Bank Holiday work (shift allowances will apply).**

## **Who is the person?**

Somebody who:

- Ideally has experience working with vulnerable and homeless people, or households with housing problems, and a desire to work to resolve these issues.
- Has an awareness of the Equality Act 2010 and the Care Act 2014, and of adult safeguarding principles and procedures
- An awareness of relevant housing legislation such as the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002 and Homeless Reduction Act 2017 would be beneficial for this role
- Is able to advocate for customers by developing positive relationships with other agencies (ie mental health services, probation, substance misuse services) and be the single point of contact if required
- Is confident in making risks assessments in relation to customers' circumstances, including identifying potential safeguarding concerns, to ensure a safe working environment at all times
- Is able to listen to people and not rush to conclusions or judgements before fully understanding what is needed or wanted by a customer.
- Has tact and diplomacy; the ability to deal with sensitive and confidential issues that may require a variety of responses. The right person will be able to manage challenging situations whilst remaining professional and objective;
- Possesses negotiating and advocacy skills
- Able to work on their own initiative and who can be proactive, and solution focused.
- Able to work well within a highly functioning team, supporting your peers and supervisor to manage a caseload of clients
- Is emotionally resilient and able to deal with the impact of being exposed to customers' difficult circumstances.
- Can maintain accurate records of all clients who you come into contact with to enable concise data collection
- Has the ability to communicate clearly to colleagues, partners and customers, verbally and in writing
- Is competent in the use of IT to manage and monitor a small team's caseload effectively, recording information appropriately on the required management information system. Basic ICT skills, including the use of Word, Excel and PowerPoint, Outlook and other Office 365 applications such as SharePoint.
- Is able to work flexibly as part of a rota, which will include shifts on some weekends and bank holidays, some early mornings and some evenings.
- Is willing and able to travel to meet customers in a variety of locations as needed within the Portsmouth city area, and at times when public transport may be limited; a valid driving licence and access to a car are therefore desirable for this role.

## **Qualifications:**

Good level of literacy and numeracy as demanded by the role.

## **Experience:**

- Experience in working with rough sleepers, hard to reach groups and/or those with multiple and complex needs.
- Understanding the diverse complexities of rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping, and the challenges they face to accessing services
- Attending multi-agency meetings in a representative capacity
- Experience of carrying out needs and risk assessments.



- Ability to challenge appropriately - this could be related to decision making by services or customer behaviours.
- Managing a caseload of clients who are at risk of poor outcomes, undertaking 1:1 support and other interventions where required, ensuring that regular and substantive contact is made

You will need to demonstrate that you have the Right to Work in the UK. No post will be offered without it.

### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

Portsmouth City Council is the Data Controller of any personal information you provide when applying for a job. It will only be used in connection with the recruitment process and will not be kept for longer than necessary. For more detailed information you can access the Data Protection Privacy Notice on our [careers portal](#).