



## **Leasehold & Right to Buy Officer**

**Salary:** Band 8 - £36,363 - £39,151 p.a.

**Hours per week:** 37 Monday to Friday

**Location:** Civic Offices, Portsmouth

**Contract type:** Fixed Term Contract/Secondment for 12 months

### **The Service:**

You will be working within the Council's Housing, Neighbourhood & Building Services, the largest social landlord in the area, responsible for approximately 18,000 properties. These properties are a mixture of flats and houses, including Freehold, located within Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport and Winchester.

The Right to Buy legislation has resulted in the private leasehold sale of circa 1850 flats and maisonettes managed by Leasehold and Right to Buy Services. This position sits within the Leasehold and Right to Buy Services team and reports directly to the Leasehold Services Manager. Complex legislation and pending legislative reforms make leasehold management a demanding and challenging area of the business (quite distinct from social housing). The Council has recently acquired a number of shared ownership properties and freehold houses that requires careful management to comply with legislation and regulations.

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

To provide a high-quality service to the leaseholders, shared ownership and freehold customers, ensuring that they are managed in accordance with the terms of their leases and deeds, legislation, regulation and best practice. To ensure residents receive a quality, helpful, responsive and value for money service. To maximise income to the business ensuring leaseholders and other customers contribute fully to their lease or contract obligations. You will be responsible for all aspects of leasehold management, including Right to Buy and shared ownership sales and any subsequent re-sale on the open market. You will be required to assist in the calculation, communicate and collect service charges and other associated costs as per the lease agreement. You will also be required to understand and enforce the terms of the lease to assist both the leaseholder and Portsmouth Homes as the landlord.

Key areas of work are:

- advising prospective purchasers under Right to Buy and open market sales from application to completion.
- providing detailed data to solicitors for open market sales
- explain leasehold charges and the terms of the lease.
- arrears management following pre-action protocol to:
  - work out affordable individually tailored arrangements.
  - provide / signposting to money advice/debt management.
  - liaise with banks/building societies/mortgage companies for payment of arrears.
  - enter to court for arrears repayment.
  - ultimately obtain forfeiture of the property
- organising repairs
- assessing requests for alterations and providing/declining permission



- arranging and undertaking one to one leasehold consultation in advance of major works including all aspects of S.20 of the Landlord & Tenant Act
- Management of Anti-social behaviour and enforcement of breaches of lease
- Management of shared ownership leaseholders including resales and assessments of potential purchasers

You will be liaising with:

- Leaseholders/shared owners/freeholders
- Tenants
- Housing staff (within planned maintenance, repairs, cleaning and grounds maintenance, estate services, area housing offices, etc.)
- Other PCC departments (legal services, accountancy/finance, ASB, community wardens etc.)
- External organisations (solicitors, contractors, police, community support workers Management Companies, managing agents etc.)

### **Who is the person?**

You will need to:

- Demonstrate a sound working knowledge of legislation governing local authority leasehold management and the Right to Buy, including relevant housing, landlord and tenant, and service charge legislation, with the ability to keep this knowledge up to date and apply it in a local authority context.
- Ensure compliance with Consumer Standards, regulatory requirements, and landlord obligations, including responding to challenge and scrutiny via the First Tier Tribunal and other regulatory bodies.
- Be an assertive and resilient person, who has the ability to deliver excellent customer service and to tailor delivery to the customers' individual needs.
- Be able to use your initiative, applying PLAN, and have the ability to make informed and appropriate decisions. This ability is especially relevant when dealing with high level complaints and Councillor enquiries.
- Have the ability to: understand and manipulate complicated numerical data used to calculate service charges, and precisely collate and determine leaseholder income and expenditure, at times without their full co-operation, to recoup arrears and sustain payments.
- Have the ability to research, understand, interpret and relay complex legislation in regard to leasehold legislation and reforms.
- Be able to work well under pressure, manage a diverse workload and meet crucial, legislative deadlines.
- Be able to apply the use of independent professional judgement when managing complex cases, determining appropriate enforcement action, and making decisions with financial and legal implications for the Council.



- Have an independent work ethic and the ability to work when required.
- Have excellent IT skills (in particular Excel, Word, Outlook and mainframe applications such as Northgate).
- Possess a full driving licence (and ideally have access to own vehicle with business insurance). Some amount of time will be spent visiting leaseholders at their homes not necessarily in the Portsmouth area.

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](#).