

Housing Assessment & Advice Officer

Band 7 - £32,061 - £36,363 p.a.

37 hours per week

Permanent

Portsmouth City Council's Housing Needs Advice & Support 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 practise and all employees are required to adhere to internal safeguarding policies.

You will be part of a busy team which deals with customers both face to face and by telephone. You will be interviewing customers about their housing situation and working with them to find solutions to their housing issues. This may involve negotiation with landlords, other housing providers, family members and internal and external agencies. You will need to ask personal and searching questions and listen carefully to responses so that you fully understand the customer's circumstances. Your challenge will be to identify actions and solutions to secure housing. You will need to manage a large case load, prioritise your work and have excellent organisational skills. You will also need to build effective working relationships with customers and landlords and explore all possible housing solutions to help prevent homelessness and the need to move.

Who is the person?

We are looking for somebody who:

- Has experience of the issues faced by vulnerable and homeless households, and a desire to assist people with housing needs, and work to proactively to resolve these issues.
- Can quickly adapt to the role, drawing on experience or transferable skills.
- Is confident and can clearly and effectively communicate verbally, interpreting legislation and explaining the impact to our customers.
- Can communicate clearly in writing, explaining legal decisions to both customers and partners.
- Understands the key elements to negotiations and can find ways to achieve outcomes for customers.
- Can listen to people and not rush to conclusions or judgements before fully understanding what is needed or wanted by a customer.

- Is emotionally resilient and able to deal with the impact of being exposed to customer's difficult circumstances, and remain professionally detached and focused even if the message you deliver involves saying no.
- Has experience of working directly with customers in a front-line service.
- Understands welfare benefits systems and the issues faced by customers experiencing financial difficulties.
- Has experience of equalities issues and is committed to equal opportunities.
- Understands safeguarding and can recognise safeguarding concerns and take appropriate action to manage risk.
- Can critically analyse information and keep clear case records.
- Works proactively and can remain motivated, working on their own initiative and organising and prioritising their workload.
- Enjoys the challenge in finding innovative solutions to problems and has the personal skills and experience to do so.
- Has IT skills suited to working in a busy office.
- Has knowledge of the local area and is able to visit people in their own homes and attend meetings in the local area.
- The ability to converse at ease with customers and provide advice in accurate spoken and written English is essential for the post.

When completing the application form, please thoroughly tailor your application to the 'Who is the Person' points with the use of examples from your experience. This is really important or you are likely not to be shortlisted.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

As part of any recruitment process, Portsmouth City Council collects and processes personal data relating to job applicants. Portsmouth City Council is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses that data and to meeting its data protection obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Completing and sending an application in for a vacancy is your consent for us to process your data for the purpose of recruitment. Your data is not used in any other way and you can withdraw your consent at any point in the recruitment process and we will destroy or delete your information.

For more detailed information on what we collect, how we use, store, delete data and your rights you can access a privacy statement on our Job board.

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