ROUGH SLEEPING NAVIGATOR x2

Salary: Band 7; £33,119 - £37,562 plus shift allowance of 7.5%

Hours: 37 per week working on a rota basis

Contract: fixed term/secondment until 31st March 2029

Reports to: Rough Sleeping Navigator Team Leader

Who are we?

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.

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.

The Rough Sleeping Programme

In August 2026 the Government announced the Rough Sleeping Programme, with the aim to end rough sleeping at the earliest opportunity. The Programme is providing local authorities funding to offer a 'route off the streets' for everyone at risk of rough sleeping this winter. Alongside accommodation, the Programme will provide wider support services to people sleeping rough, including identifying a route into more permanent housing through the private rented sector, social housing sector and supported housing sector.

This is an exciting opportunity for the right person to work with rough sleepers supported by interventions funded by the Programme, helping them to secure and sustain accommodation. Most people accessing the 'routes off the street' offer will require practical support to help them off the streets, address immediate needs and

move towards a housing outcome. Some people, particularly those with complex and multiple needs or a history of repeat homelessness, will require more intensive and longer-term support to sustain settled accommodation and recover from homelessness.

What is the job?

Rough Sleeping Navigators provide specialist advice and support around housing issues, working with and developing bespoke housing plans for the most entrenched individuals who are rough sleeping, and those with complex and multiple needs. They frequently work with people who experience additional barriers to accessing accommodation and services, and who may be distrusting of professionals and therefore struggle to engage with them. The role of the Navigator is to build positive working relationships with the service users on their caseload, enabling and empowering them to overcome those barriers.

You will therefore need to fully understand the circumstances of rough sleepers needing a 'route off the streets', identifying those who need additional support to meet their housing and any additional needs. Your role will involve undertaking a comprehensive assessment, working where relevant with partner agencies such as health, probation and drug and alcohol services. You will assemble bespoke support plans and identify any risks to be managed, and work with other agencies to co-ordinate the support and housing plans helping to understand and overcome any barriers to customers moving towards independence.

You will be part of a busy team based at the Rough Sleeping Hub, provided by HNAS, which deals with customers both face to face and by telephone. Your role will include supporting the Rough Sleeping Team and the Rough Sleeping Operational Manager to deliver a safe and effective daily drop-in service for rough sleepers, ensuring their needs are met in a welcoming and trauma-informed environment. The Rough Sleeping Hub is open seven days a week, including all bank holidays, and accordingly you will work on a rota that enables this level of provision.

You will be responsible for managing a personalised budget for customers to help them move forward in a positive way, using this budget creatively to maximise resources and meet their needs. You'll understand the complexities of homelessness, and the diversity of those affected by it, recognising the need to put the individual at the centre of your work.

You will also be required to represent the service at multi-agency case conferences and planning meetings, supporting the team and other colleagues within HNAS to ensure the service meets its statutory duties in preventing and relieving people's homelessness and safeguarding those at risk of harm or abuse.

As such, you will be able to work independently, capable of managing your own time and prioritising tasks effectively. You will be able complete pieces of work and make appropriate and sometimes instant decisions showing clear and structured reasoning.

You will be able to work with limited daily supervision yet be able to identify when it is appropriate to pull on your manager for guidance and support. You will follow lone-working procedures and remain vigilant of personal safety issues.

You will have strong interpersonal skills, with an ability to relate to service users, professionals and colleagues alike, and maintain productive working relationships. You will have the ability to gain the trust and cooperation of other agencies and get the best from them, and you will be able to engage with customers in a sensitive and non-judgmental manner, remaining focused and objective when confronted with emotionally charged conversations or challenging situations

You'll also be able to keep accurate and up-to-date records using a variety of IT systems and make yourself available to support colleagues in the Housing Needs, Advice & Support Service.

Who is the person?

You need to:

- Be able to work with vulnerable client groups, ideally with clients experiencing homelessness or with complex needs, and an ability to establish positive working relationships with customers.
- Have the ability to listen to people and not rush to conclusions or judgements before fully understanding what is wanted or needed by the customer.
- Have an awareness of relevant housing legislation such as the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002 and Homeless Reduction Act 2017
- Have an awareness of the Equality Act 2010 and the Care Act 2014, and of adult safeguarding principles and procedures;
- Be able to interpret reports and assessments from a wide range of agencies, and use them to inform the development of support plans and identify appropriate resources to deliver these;
- Be confident in making risks assessments in relation to customers' circumstances, and to ensure a safe working environment at all times.
- Have the ability to make sound judgements based on appropriate evidence and to be able to analyse complex issues succinctly;
- Be able to listen to people and not rush to conclusions or judgements before fully understanding what is needed or wanted by a customer.
- Have tact and diplomacy; possessing the ability to deal with sensitive and confidential issues that may require a variety of responses. You will be able to manage challenging situations whilst remaining professional and objective;
- Possess negotiating and advocacy skills.
- Be emotionally resilient and able to deal with the impact of being exposed to customers' difficult circumstances.
- Understand safeguarding and can recognise safeguarding concerns and take appropriate action to manage risk.

- Be able to work in partnership with other agencies; to understand the roles, remits and operational limitations of other services and to work effectively as part of a "Team Around the Accommodation";
- Be able to work independently and using your own initiative, prioritising work tasks effectively and making decisions with limited supervision;
- Have the ability to find innovative solutions to issues facing the customers and the skills and ability to manage personalised budgets effectively and creatively to help customers achieve their potential.
- Keep and maintain appropriate and accurate records at all times, using IT packages and database.
- Must be willing and able to travel to meet customers in a variety of locations as needed within the Portsmouth city area.
- Be prepared to work outside of normal working hours occasionally, if this is what is needed to get the job done;
- Be experienced in working with and using IT systems, including Microsoft Office applications and client record systems;

Qualifications:
Good level of literacy and numeracy as required for 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.
- Some experience of working within the housing and homelessness legislative frameworks is highly desirable
- 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

General Requirements

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. The normal hours of work for this role are **2.00pm to 10.00pm, worked across five days per week on a rolling rota basis**. The rota will include weekend and Bank Holiday working as required to meet service needs (shift allowances will apply). There may also be occasions where flexibility is required to work alternative hours to meet operational demands.

Post holders 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.

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.