Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

Independent Supported Housing Assessor

Commissioned Services & Vulnerable People/ Accommodation & Allocations teams (Housing Needs, Advice & Support service)

Salary: Band 7 - £33,119 - £37,562 p.a.

Hours per week: 37

Location: Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Posts available:

- Fixed Term Contract/Secondment for up to 12 months to cover maternity leave
- Fixed Term Contract/Secondment for 2 years

What is the role?

Working in a small team within the busy Housing Needs, Advice & Support (HNAS) service, you'll be working with members of the public who are facing homelessness and require supported housing. These may be some of the most vulnerable members of society and you will regularly meet and work with customers with complex needs.

You'll play a crucial role in assessing customers who have been referred for temporary or supported accommodation, often as a means to prevent or relieve their homelessness. You will be involved in risk assessment, identifying specific requirements and considering support needs. You will make recommendations over where customers should be placed within the temporary and supported accommodation services available that HNAS commissions.

You will work in partnership with our contracted support providers to ensure support is of good quality and targeted at those most in need; identifying where other agencies and professionals working with customers may be pulled in to provide a wider team of support.

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'll provide tailored plans which meet the varying needs of your customers, promoting the sustainment of supported accommodation placements and engagement with the support on offer for those in need.

This is a highly varied and interesting role, which has daily interactions with a wide range of partner agencies across both statutory and non-statutory sectors. A such, you'll be given plenty of opportunities to further develop your skills and understanding across a diverse range of areas that could include housing, homelessness and social care; multi-agency safeguarding processes and frameworks; service delivery and improvement, commissioning and contract management.

You will be responsible for:

- Fully understanding the circumstances of customers who have been identified as being in need of supported accommodation;

- Undertaking a comprehensive assessment, working where relevant with partner agencies such as health, children's services, probation and drug and alcohol services;

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- Assembling a bespoke support plan and identifying any risks to be managed by the contracted supported or temporary accommodation provider;

- Working with accommodation and support providers to identify and develop onward housing plans for people living in supported or temporary placements, helping to understand and overcome any barriers to customers moving on from their accommodation;

- Liaising with commissioned support providers to understand and manage demand for their services; exploring data to identify trends which inform ongoing monitoring and future planning for future supported or temporary accommodation contracts;

- Supporting colleagues within the Housing Needs, Advice and Support section to ensure the service meets its statutory duties in preventing and relieving people's homelessness, whilst also making best use of the resources available.

The role will involve a significant amount of time working out of the office, as you engage with customers in the community, or those already placed in supported housing. You will also be required to represent the service at multi-agency case conferences and planning meetings, and there may be an occasional need to work outside normal office hours, to respond to urgent situations or customers who are particularly difficult to engage with.

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 decisions by applying the correct policy and legislative framework, 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.

You will be able to respond to the various issues presented by working with vulnerable homeless individuals, and be able to remain 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 HNAS service.

What do staff say about working in Housing Needs, Advice & Support?
"It's a job where you genuinely help people"
"Housing Needs Advice & Support is a real frontier service. It can be challenging, but there are great opportunities for sowing the seeds of positive change into people's lives"

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"No two days are the same"

Who is the person?

You need to:

- Be educated to minimum GCSE grade A to C in Maths and English, or equivalent numeracy/literacy qualification
- Be experienced in working with and using IT systems, including Microsoft Office applications and client record systems
- Have a knowledge 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 child and 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
- Have the ability to make sound judgements based on appropriate evidence and to be able to analyse complex issues succinctly
- Have tact and diplomacy; 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
- Be able to work in partnership with other agencies; have the ability to understand the role, remit and operational limitations of other services and to work effectively as part of a "team round the client"
- Have the ability to work independently and using your own initiative, prioritising work tasks effectively and making decisions with limited supervision
- Be prepared to work outside of office hours occasionally, if this is what is needed to get the job done
- Ideally have a current driving licence and daily use of a vehicle, as the role involves daily travel around the city.

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.