



## **Housing Officer**

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

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

**Location:** Area Housing Offices, Portsmouth

**Contract type:** Permanent

### **Job Purpose:**

The Social Housing Sector has seen considerable change in the last 2 years with the addition of new and revised regulations including a new set of consumer standards. Portsmouth Homes is undertaking a programme of change to respond to the new environment and changes in expectations from our tenants and leaseholders.

The Housing Officer role can be complex and requires the ability to work with changing priorities and be flexible in approach. This role is responsible for the effective and efficient delivery of housing management services to a dedicated patch serving approximately 400 homes. This role provides generic housing management services including anti-social behaviour management, arrears management including debt and benefit advice, void management and lettings and general tenancy management ensuring income maximisation, efficient letting of homes and that tenants receive great customer service throughout their tenancy.

The Housing Officer (HO) role is a fully generic role delivering a comprehensive housing management service to a cohort of Portsmouth Homes tenants. The role is predominantly reactive, to help support and empower tenants to be able to sustain and maintain their tenancies and live their best lives, whilst feeling safe and secure in their homes and communities. Responsibility starts with the viewing of an empty property, with prospective tenants, and the need to ensure that the property meets their Housing Need and is suitable in terms of other factors. Support is provided at the beginning of a new tenancy, ensuring that the new tenants understand their legal obligations and expectations of them as a tenant and good neighbour.

The Housing Officer then supports the tenant and their household in managing and sustaining their tenancy throughout its life, dealing with tenancy enforcement, including Anti-Social Behaviour, Money and Debt Advice and Income Collection, changes to personal circumstances and household makeup, and termination of tenancy or dealing with deceased estates. The role is a generic cradle to grave tenancy management service.

A Housing Officer must be multi-disciplined, with a high degree of responsibility, expectation and complexity, and the need to be able to manage conflicting priorities and react positively in crisis and chaotic situations. The Housing Officer will work closely with the Local Housing Manager to track and manage demand into the patch contributing to performance data where appropriate and using all tools available to inform priorities for each working day and to plan time and work ahead, where possible. The Housing Officer is the main relationship manager with Portsmouth Homes Tenants and will act as the link between the tenant and other services as needed. The ability to keep pertinent and accurate records of all interactions with tenants on the tenancy record is essential ensuring that Portsmouth Homes maintains accurate data on its tenants and homes.

## What is the role?

- To provide inspiring excellent customer service whilst providing generic housing management services to a dedicated patch of homes.
- To ensure the effective and efficient collection of rent and service charges, management of ASB cases, void management and letting of properties as well as general tenancy related services to a patch of council homes.
- To use data and all tools available to inform area of focus and time management.
- To work with other Housing Officers and the Local Housing Manager as well as colleagues in HNAS, Play & Youth, Communities, Resident Engagement, Building Services and Green & Clean and the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, Tenancy Support team to ensure our residents can sustain their tenancies, best use is made of our stock, and our homes and communities are well maintained and enhance quality of life for our residents.
- Engage with other teams across the wider organisation as appropriate including ASC and children's services as well as environmental health and housing benefit and legal services to resolve more complex issues in support of our residents.
- Prepare cases for and represent Portsmouth Homes in court in tenancy breach cases which may involve giving evidence and being questioned by a defence lawyer.
- To represent the council at evictions ensuring that the eviction is completed, and the tenant is given the correct advice and support.
- To participate in a duty rota to ensure adequate service cover is provided in area offices for visiting customers.
- To work with other directorates or agencies in multi-agency meetings where needed to ensure residents are receiving the support needed and Housing Officers are supported to do their jobs.
- To cover community-based surgeries to provide housing management services and advice to tenants whilst building stronger working relationships with other partners in the community.
- To work with Local Housing Manager, Tenancy Support Advisors, ASB Advisors and Money Advisors to manage complex cases involving residents with complex needs such as disability, mental health conditions, neurodiversity and or addictions ensuring that the appropriate processes are followed, law is adhered to, and appropriate advice and support is provided.
- To follow policy, process and manager guidance when assessing case management and deciding on appropriate actions provided to ensure it is within housing law and proportionate.
- To contribute to a system thinking approach to provide solutions to problems and to identify improvements to services either through influencing changes in process or policy.
- Responsible for ensuring the welfare of residents across a geographical location in so far as they are related to housing services including taking steps to ensure tenants are safeguarded.
- Responsible for the efficient collection and management of data and information relating to tenancies and residents ensuring compliance with GDPR rules and regulator guidance on data management and storage.
- Supporting tenants to ensure that their welfare is protected and that they can access the appropriate advice and support as needed including signposting them to other agencies, handle difficult sensitive or volatile situations confidently, tactfully and with empathy.
- Responsible for ensuring individual training needs are identified and addressed with support from the Local Housing Manager
- To contribute to specific working groups, to ensure consistency of service provision, adapt services to changing external environments, and continuous improvement of

service delivery, by using feedback, data and measures, as well as best practice and Regulator feedback.

- The ability to communicate clearly and confidently in all forms to a diverse range of tenants, representatives and organisations to effectively support tenants and their households effectively.
- Actively promote and model the council's desired behaviours.
- Take reasonable care of own health and safety, and that of other persons who may be affected by acts or omissions at work.
- To be able to travel efficiently between Area Offices and housing stock owned by Portsmouth Homes.
- Undertake any other duties that are commensurate with the requirements of the post.

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

You need:

- To have some Housing Management experience working for a social housing provider.
- To have a full driving license and access to a car
- Excellent literacy & numeracy skills (5 GCSEs including Maths and English or equivalent is desirable)
- A Housing or Management qualification is desirable
- Extensive and adaptable IT skills including the Microsoft 365 package (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams etc)
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills and the ability to absorb and interpret complex information
- Empathy and ability to build positive working relationships with tenants with complex needs
- To be passionate about and have proven experience of providing excellent customer service
- Excellent communication skills with the ability to adapt flexibly to a wide variety of audiences for a range of purposes
- Experience of dealing with and an understanding of GDPR and Data Protection issues and legislation as may be pertinent to the role
- Resilient with strong emotional intelligence
- Good understanding of safeguarding and the reporting process
- Experienced in managing and coordinating multiple priorities, demonstrating excellent decision-making skills
- A good understanding of the principles of effective tenancy management and the importance that good data management has to regulatory compliance and ongoing service improvement
- Evidence of commitment to own continuing personal and professional development
- Influencing skills (engage at all levels of the organisation and work with others to agree support needed for tenants to sustain their tenancy and to be able to build trust with tenants to assist in building a working relationship that supports them to sustain their tenancy plus to give evidence at court to support the councils case)
- The ability to build effective working relationships with colleagues, managers and partner agencies.
- To give advice and guidance when needed and explain complex issues to tenants.
- To keep good quality records and notes that can be used to inform case actions, complaint handling and court or ombudsman records.
- To be enterprising, resourceful and adaptable, using your own initiative.
- Confidently deal with unexpected or unanticipated problems, reprioritising



- work as required and escalating where appropriate.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment in complex and pressurised situations

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](#).