

Role Profile and Specification - Private Sector Housing Officer

Service Area	Housing
Role Title	Private Sector Housing Officer
Location	Oxted/Agile
Reports to	Housing Options Manager
Salary/Grade	Grade 3
Duration/Hours	37 hours Fixed Term Contract

Service Area Purpose

To provide an effective and proactive homeless prevention and allocation service, ensuring outstanding customer service and service delivery standards are achieved and providing a critical source of support for local people seeking help with their housing needs.

Job Purpose

To prevent homelessness by increasing access to accommodation in the private rented sector for households in housing need, ensuring high standards of customer care and that all statutory obligations are met.

Specific Responsibilities

- To assist people in housing need to access suitable accommodation in the private rented sector, liaising with the Housing Options Team when matching suitable clients to available properties.
- To increase awareness of the Private Sector Access Scheme amongst private sector landlords and letting agents.
- To be responsible for maintaining and updating procedures for the Private Sector Access Scheme.
- To maintain a database of available properties, private landlords and letting agencies.
- To arrange and attend accompanied viewings and to conduct inventories with landlords and tenants.
- To provide clients with practical support to make the accommodation habitable (e.g. assisting with accessing furniture schemes).
- To ensure that appropriate referrals are made for clients to the DWP, Charities, Social Services, and other statutory and support agencies.
- To advise clients on ways to maximise their income through benefit entitlements and debt advice.

- To ensure close liaison with the Council's Benefits Team to facilitate any possible entitlement to Housing Benefit / Local Housing Allowance and Discretionary Housing Payments.
- To liaise with the Private Sector Housing Team in relation to health and safety and licensing of properties.
- To inspect the standard of vacant properties and ensure health and safety checks are in order.
- To ensure that the Private Sector access Scheme operates within set budget limits.
- To be responsible for collecting monies owed by tenants and landlords from the Private Sector Access Scheme.
- To provide advice and assistance to landlords regarding tenancy and management issues.
- To support the Council's duties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025, including assisting with enforcement of the new periodic tenancy system, strengthened investigatory powers, and updated licensing and possession rules coming into force from May 2026.
- To maximize the sustainment of tenancies for people assisted through the rent deposit bond scheme through visits and regular contact with both tenants and landlords and to address any issues which may arise during a tenancy and threaten its sustainability.
- To deal with all relevant correspondence and keep clear and concise records of interviews and visits.
- To contribute to the Council's homelessness strategy
- To provide cover and support to the homeless service when necessary and ensure that homeless households are suitably housed permanently within target times.
- To assist with the preparation of information and statistics for inclusion in government returns and submissions, customer reports and performance indicators, as required.
- To participate in and contribute positively to external/internal working groups as required.
- To contribute positively to the use and development of new technology within the Housing Needs Team.
- To undertake any other duties that may be required, which are commensurate with the level of the post.
- Carry out additional duties commensurate to the level of the role.

Person specification

Qualifications / Education

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to GCSE level or equivalent experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of continuous professional development.

Experience

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing options experience within a local authority or Registered Provider setting. • Experience of housing advice and casework. • Working with external agencies to deliver successful outcomes. • Dealing with complex cases through multi-agency working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering continuous improvement in housing services. • Experience of letting or managing tenancies in the private rented or social housing sector. • Experience of supporting customers with financial difficulties. • Experience of liaising with statutory, non-statutory and voluntary agencies. • Experience of dealing with vulnerable and sometimes demanding customers.

Key Skills and Knowledge

Essential
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate well with customers, Councillors and external agencies. • Able to interpret policy, procedures, and strategies in relation to Housing Needs. • Self-sufficient in the use of databases and MS Office products and the use of CRM (Customer Relationship Management Systems). • Able to write accurate and clear correspondence and reports • Able to plan and prioritise when under pressure. • Ability and commitment to working with individuals and groups to problem solve and achieve positive service outcomes. • Able to innovate by both conceiving and implementing new services or improvements to existing services. • Pragmatic, creative and flexible approach to problem solving and committed to taking initiative and achieving practical solutions. • An understanding of local government services and functions and the major issues facing local government. • Experience of working with Elected Members and of dealing with politically sensitive issues. • Understanding of the broad requirements of the data protection principles. • A commitment to equality and diversity.