

Post title:	Housing Options Officer
Grade:	I
Responsible to:	Senior Housing Options Officer/Team leader
Staff managed:	None
Directorate:	Community Development
Service:	Housing
Job family:	OS - Operational Support
Date of issue:	June 2023

Job context

- To provide a full housing options advice and homeless service to those clients who are in housing need, fulfilling the Council's statutory duties, powers and functions under the relevant homeless legislation.
- To support the objectives of the Council's Homelessness Strategy.

Job Purpose:

To prevent homelessness wherever possible and assist households to achieve sustainable housing solutions. To provide a full housing options advice and homeless service to those clients who are in housing need, fulfilling the Council's statutory duties, powers and functions under the relevant homeless legislation. To support the objectives of the Council's Homelessness Strategy. Where required to participate in an out of hours standby rota to respond to homelessness emergencies within the locality area, including incidents in temporary accommodation.

Operational management:

- To work with clients, provide advice and investigate homelessness applications made under the terms of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended)
- To interview clients and complete an assessment of the applicant's circumstances, in all cases, to determine the duty owed to the client and inform the client in writing of the Council's decision in accordance with the relevant legislation seeking advice and guidance where needed from colleagues.
- Providing information to clients in a variety of formats on a broad range of alternatives from house purchases, low cost home ownership, registered providers, social housing, private rented etc.
- To actively prevent homelessness through a variety of methods which will include negotiations with family/friends and/or housing providers, comprehensive welfare benefits information, detailed debt advice, negotiations with creditors/financial institutions and referrals to mortgage rescue schemes.
- To provide advocacy support for customers at risk of losing their home in a range of situations including: negotiating with mortgage lenders, social and private landlords, attending possession hearings.
- Complete a Personal Housing Plan with each client where appropriate, compiling a tailored set of actions both the client and staff will compete in order to prevent or relieve the client's homelessness.
- Provide face to face contacts with customers and conduct home visits or meetings at locations in the County to ensure all members of the community have access to services including homelessness prevention and appropriate support.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some areas of the County the post holder will be required to assist in the management of accommodation leased or owned by the Council, monitoring repairs and rent collection as directed by Senior officers • To be mindful of relevant case law in decision making and the Equalities Act 2010 and, in particular, a persons protected characteristics, Care Act 2014, Children's Act 1989. • Support customers owning cases end-to-end and seeking input from specialist officers and others for complex opinion as and when needed • Ensuring that duties are carried out with full regard to the Council's policies, including Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety and Information Governance. • Where required by the particular area of the County the postholder may need to be part of the council's out of hours Emergency Duty Service, making an initial assessment of the council's duty to homeless households, providing advice and assistance and where appropriate, carrying out emergency admissions to temporary accommodation. • Administer the Council's Bond and Rent in Advance Scheme including assessment of eligibility for the scheme, inspection of properties to assess suitability and at the end of tenancies, dealing with landlord claims, preparing inventories and agreements. • Assist the registrations teams where required with the administration of the housing register including making decisions regarding, banding for applicants at risk of homelessness, carry out home visits and other verification duties as required. • Where required deal with enquiries from applicants to the housing register, and assist customers to effectively engage with North Yorkshire Home Choice including assisted bidding for vulnerable households.
Resource management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes recommendations to the Senior Housing Options Officer/Team Leader for payments under the council's Homelessness Prevention Fund, Repossessions Loan Fund and DHP Deposit Scheme in accordance with approved policy and procedure. • Ensure the effective management of the full range of temporary accommodation available either directly or through liaison with the Temporary Accommodation Staff, this may include the co-ordination of support regarding risk assessments and housing related support plans for homeless households in temporary accommodation. • In the absence of the Senior Housing Options Officer/Team leader, liaises with the other staff members to co-ordinate the placement of homeless households into and between the range of temporary accommodation available, often without advance notice, to comply with statutory duties and to minimise the use of Bed and Breakfast. • Ensures that all relevant records are updated promptly.
Partnerships:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work with, and to sign-post customers to, voluntary/other partner agencies (including Mental Health and Adult Care services, children's Social care, IDAS, and Probation) in order to contribute to a high quality Housing Options Service. • Engage with landlords, agents and wider organisations whilst promoting joint working initiatives in the Private Rented Sector. • Where required advertise properties on behalf of other Registered Providers with whom the Council has nomination agreements, and provide nominations in accordance with the Home Choice Policy.
Strategic management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide information on homelessness issues as required by colleagues and senior officers including statistical information if needed.
Communications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide written correspondence to all customers as and when required. • To provide information on homelessness issues as required by colleagues and senior officers including statistical information if needed. • To work with, and to sign-post customers to, voluntary/other partner agencies (including Mental Health and Adult Care services, children's Social care, IDAS, and Probation) in order to contribute to a high quality Housing Options Service. • Attendance at professional meetings.

Systems and information:

- To manage sensitive information such as personal documents and information within multi-agency meetings in line with GDPR requirements.
- Ensure all administrative records, documents and notes are updated promptly in accordance with procedures.

Safeguarding:

- The Council takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and to protect adults at risk. There is an expectation that all staff will positively demonstrate their awareness and support to this commitment.

Person Specification:

Essential

Desirable

Knowledge and Experience

- Awareness and knowledge and commitment to Equality and Diversity and Health and Safety legislation and of safeguarding responsibilities.
- Knowledge or understanding of current housing issues and solutions in respect of homeless people
- Dealing with the public in a customer service/advisory capacity
- Experience of assessing need and offering housing advice to the public to achieve effective solutions to housing problems

- Knowledge and understanding of local government and of the areas of responsibility.
- Knowledge of legislation governing homelessness and allocations, and related case law
- Landlord and Tenant law, specifically the termination of tenancies, unlawful eviction and harassment and possession procedures
- Knowledge of data protection principles
- Previous housing related experience and working within homelessness

Occupational Skills

- Ability to plan, allocate and evaluate workloads, determining work methods to achieve objectives
- Ability to seek, evaluate and organise information to aid decision making.
- Ability to exchange information to solve problems and make decisions through leading and contributing to meetings and group discussions to solve problems and make decisions.
- Ability to create, maintain and enhance constructive working relationships.
- Ability to work in demanding situations with customers in difficult and stressful circumstances
- IT literate to process own letters, use spread sheets and databases and web based systems

Behaviours

[Link](#)

Professional Qualifications

- Membership of a relevant professional body.
- A qualification in housing or in a relevant subject or experience in a field of Housing.

Other Requirements

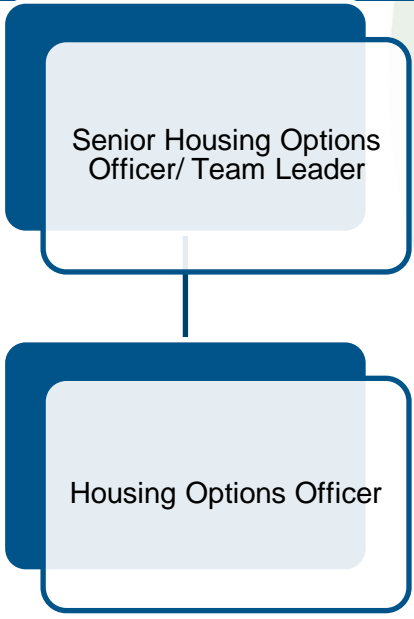
- Highest professional integrity.
- Personally and professionally resilient.

Career progression:

- At NYC we value our employees, and as part of this we can provide wider opportunities to progress in your career. Through discussion with your manager identify areas of interest and consider avenues to progress to them, e.g. apprenticeships and work shadowing/coaching.

- As a large council we have a range of roles, across our services, and can provide a wealth of career and development opportunities to help our employees find fulfilling career development opportunities.

Structure



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graph TD; A[Senior Housing Options Officer/ Team Leader] --- B[Housing Options Officer];
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Senior Housing Options
Officer/ Team Leader

Housing Options Officer

NB – Assessment criteria for recruitment will be notified separately.

Optional - Statement for recruitment purposes: You should use this information to make the best of your application by identifying some specific pieces of work you may have undertaken in any of these areas. You will be tested in some or all of the skill specific areas over the course of the selection process.