



Role Profile

Job Title: Gypsy and Traveller Officer	Grade/ Level: M	Post Number: HG0008
Directorate: Adults, Housing and Public Health	Job Family: Housing and Community Safety	Date Prepared: May 2021

Role reports to (Job Title):

Hay Lane Officer reports to Neighbourhood Housing Manager

Unauthorised Encampments Officer to the Homeless Prevention Manager

*Please attach an organisation chart showing where this job reports within the structure.

Job Purpose:

The role of the Gypsy & Traveller Officer is to offer a housing and site management services to Gypsy & Traveller communities in Swindon. You will form a team of two officers with one officer primarily responsible for the management of the Hay Lane permanent Gypsy and Traveller site and one officer responsible for tackling and resolving unauthorised encampments.

Both officers will be required to work together on occasions and provide cover for one and other during absences.

As the Gypsy and Traveller Officer for Hay Lane you will have responsibility for undertaking regular site inspections, managing and re-letting empty pitches, dealing with reports of anti-social behaviour including breaches of any site arrangements, managing rent arrears and working with the community to improve resident involvement and satisfaction

As the Gypsy and Traveller Officer for Unauthorised Encampments you will have responsibility for visiting, assessing and monitoring any suspected illegal encampment in the borough of Swindon. You will work with the members of the encampments, carry out welfare checks and try to find a suitable solution. If a solution cannot be found, you will be required to issue any legal notices or orders to remove the unauthorised encampment and attend court if necessary.

Key Accountabilities:

1. Keep up-to-date with legislation and national advice relating to Gypsies and Travellers. Liaise with others to identify good practice and trends within the travelling community, attending courses and conferences as appropriate.
2. Liaise with the Police, Health Authorities, Social Services, Education departments, Benefits Agencies, etc. to discuss and advise on all matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers.
3. Respond to ad hoc enquiries from the general public, MPs, elected members, etc.

4. Develop and maintain local, regional and national lines of communication with groups and agencies dealing directly or indirectly with Gypsy and Traveller issues.

Hay Lane – Permanent Site

1. Manage the effective running and supervision of the site (37 units), including consultations with residents where appropriate. Work with the community to improve resident involvement and satisfaction.
2. Implement development plans and maintenance-planned works programs as appropriate.
3. Carryout site surveys and raise orders for appropriate repair works, engaging specialist contractors where necessary.
4. Supervise visiting staff/contractors.
5. Undertake effective income management of rent charges. Review all rent accounts on a weekly basis and act where required. This includes supporting and assisting residents who encounter financial difficulties and making use of internal support teams. Where residents won't pay and cannot be supported, pursuing rent arrears, and if appropriate, commencing legal action.
6. Provide utilities help and assistance including the issuing of prepayment cards and ensure the money is deposited in line with financial regulations.
7. Liaise with Health, Social Services, Police, Education and Benefits Agencies etc, as to the needs of the Gypsies and Travellers residing at the site.
8. Give accommodation support and advice to the residents, including benefits advice and ensure there is a maximum take up of housing related benefits.
9. Provide general support and advice on any other matters, signposting as appropriate.
10. Allocate vacant pitches in line with the allocations policy, keeping a register of potential occupants. Ensure any vacant pitches are swiftly occupied to maximize revenues.
11. Effectively use IT to log work and review service delivery.
12. Develop, prepare and review site rules and conditions of occupation, including those involving general behaviour, nuisance, vehicles, children, animals, etc. Ensure the enforcement of the site rules and conditions of occupation. Mediate in the event of disputes and where appropriate, commence legal action to curb nuisance and tackle Anti-Social Behaviour.
13. Deal effectively with complaints in line with the Council's procedures.

Chiseldon Firs – Transit Site

1. Manage the effective running and supervision of the site, including consultations with site users where appropriate.
2. Enable the usage of the site within the Gypsy and Traveller community and prepare development plans where appropriate.
3. Liaise with Social Services, Police, Education and Benefits Agency etc, as to the needs of the Gypsies and Travellers occupying this site.
4. Give accommodation support and advice to the residents, including benefits advice and ensure there is a maximum take up of appropriate benefits.
5. Provide general support and advice on any other matters, signposting as appropriate.
6. Ensure comprehensive records of occupation are kept and maintained and the site is effectively managed and maintained.
7. Collect rents for pitches and work-pens and ensure the money is deposited in line with financial regulations. Pursue rent arrears, negotiate payment plans and where appropriate, commence legal action.
8. Carryout site surveys and raise orders for appropriate repair works and engage specialist contractors where necessary.

9. Manage visiting staff/contractors.
10. Develop and enforce site rules and conditions of occupation, including those involving general behaviour, nuisance, vehicles, children, animals, etc. Mediate in the event of disputes and where appropriate, commence legal action to curb nuisance.

Unauthorised Sites

1. Investigate all unauthorised or reports of unauthorised occupation in the borough of Swindon. Instigate onsite Health, Education, Accommodation and Welfare enquiries. Following such investigations, compile necessary records and reports and liaise with Health, Education and Welfare agencies etc. where appropriate to complete social enquiry assessments.
2. Lead and co-ordinate the Council's action and if necessary, the legal response to evict any such groups, including the service of directions and notices, court appearances, liaison with police etc.
3. Inspect all sites following the departure of Gypsies and/or Travellers and arrange for sites to be cleared of rubbish/debris etc. when appropriate.
4. Implement measures (where appropriate) to secure land to stop incursions and regularly monitor and risk assess all vulnerable areas of land within the Borough.
5. Monitor and record the number of unauthorised sites and report to the appropriate Lead Member/Council Commission as appropriate. Attend all appropriate panels/commissions /cabinets/meetings as required.
6. Where occupation occurs on non-Council owned land, give advice to owners and lawful occupiers (when called on to do so) of the remedies available to them to deal with trespassers and advise on measures to stop re-incursion.
7. Liaise with members of the settled community concerned about Gypsy and Traveller issues and act as the Council's mediator addressing/resolving issues that arise, in liaison with the appropriate agencies.
8. Review and evaluate new legal remedies to prevent unauthorised encampments.
9. Liaise with the Police about the implementation of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (as amended).

Supplementary Accountabilities:

1. Participate in equality and diversity training, information briefings and events as and when required as part of continuous professional development.
2. Promote equality and diversity best practice in all areas of work.
3. Ensure that any identified personal training needs are discussed with the immediate supervisor including being appraised in accordance with the Council's development and appraisal scheme, applying the principles of Investors in People, and to undertake a programme of continuous development.
4. In accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 you must take reasonable care so as not to endanger yourself or other persons whilst at work. You must also co-operate with the Council to enable it to comply with its statutory duties for health and safety.
5. You must work in accordance with training or instructions given, make proper use of any personal protective equipment provided and inform your manager of any hazardous situations or risks of which you are aware.
6. You must ensure you undertake responsibilities relating to your position as detailed within your Directorate Health and Safety Policy.
7. Undertake any other duties that can be accommodated within the grading level of the post.

Job Scope: <i>Number and type of jobs directly managed:</i>	Job Scope: <i>Direct responsibility for financial resources and / or physical assets</i>
Typical tasks supervised/allocated to others: nil	Budget: 0
	Assets: nil

<p>Knowledge and Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full, current driving license. • Experience of working with diverse communities. • Experience of managing and developing respectful, productive and supportive relationships with residents, colleagues, managers and external agencies and stakeholders • Experience in partnership working • Experience of working with Microsoft Office packages. • Experience of problem solving and working under pressure. • Understanding and/or experience of legal/court proceedings. <p>Preferred</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of rent collection, understanding welfare benefits and promotion of income maximisation • A minimum of 2 years' experience in housing management or similar role • Understanding of void management including re-letting. • Have experience of working with the Gypsy and Traveller community. • Have knowledge and cultural awareness of heritage and backgrounds of different groups within the community. • Hold a relevant housing related qualification
<p>Decision Making: <i>ie responsibility of postholder for taking decisions and independent action</i></p> <p>The role will be supervised by the Neighbourhood Housing Manager / Homeless Prevention Manager and most strategic decisions will lie with that role.</p>
<p>Contacts and Relationships:</p> <p>The post-holder deals with:</p> <p>Gypsy and Traveller individuals and groups by telephone, email and face-to-face.</p> <p>There will be some contact as required with the Courts, Solicitors, MPs, Elected Members, Government Departments and their Agencies, Senior Officers, Officers of other Local Authorities, the Police and Fire Services, Customs & Excise, the Utilities, Health, Education and Welfare Agencies, the Media, Chambers of Commerce and other Business forums, Rights Groups, Charities, Landowners, the Public and their agents.</p>
<p>Creativity and Innovation: <i>n/a</i></p>
<p>Emotional Demands of the job:</p>

The post holder may deal with people in difficult situations with issues such as debt, repair issues and anti-social behaviour. Residents may be at risk of losing their homes in extreme circumstances. The post holders will be supported by the Neighbourhood Housing Manager / Homeless Prevention Manager and will always be accompanied at visits to traveller sites.

Job Specific Competencies

1. The requirement to drive will be an essential feature of the post.
2. Highly motivated with rigorous attention to detail and capable of learning and implementing new ideas quickly. The ability to be able to deliver services in a timely manner.
3. Excellent inter-personal skills, including being an accomplished communicator (verbal, written and presentation skills) with the ability to work for long periods both alone and as a team member, with a determined approach to duties. Ability to tailor communication effectively to the intended audience, including residents, colleagues and contractors.
4. Actively listens and has a pro-active approach.
5. Ability to set priorities and exercise judgement within the area of responsibility, with support from Neighbourhood Housing Manager / Homeless Prevention Manager.
6. Ability to interpret information, such as primary legislation, Government good practice and set in local strategy context, with support from Neighbourhood Housing Manager / Homeless Prevention Manager
7. Ability to organise contractors, with support from Neighbourhood Housing Manager / Homeless Prevention Manager.
8. The ability to work flexibly and proactively.
9. The ability to work sensitively with others and show consideration for their needs and feelings.

Values and Behaviours

We strive to underpin our culture of being 'At our Best' through strong management and authentic leadership. This means getting the management basics right. We own and demonstrate accountability, both individually and collectively, and aim to get things right first time. Building on this we also expect everyone at SBC to demonstrate and live our organisational values and behaviours, by displaying:

- Accountability at all levels
- Customer care and pride in what we do
- Continuous learning and evaluation
- Valuing one another and the contribution each of us makes

Employee Signature:	
Print Name:	Date
Line Manager's Signature	
Print Name:	Date: