



Role Profile

Job Title: Neighbourhood Housing Officer	Role Profile Number: SBC_12096
Grade: CFL8 Salary:	Date Prepared: April 2024
Directorate/Group: Housing	Reporting to: Neighbourhood Housing Manager
Structure Chart attached:	Yes

Job Purpose:

To provide a flexible, effective and pro-active housing management service which including maximizing rent collection rate and enabling tenant's independence with all aspects of their tenancy. To ensure estate and tenancy management functions are carried out in line with policy, procedure and legislation.

Be responsible for housing management and establish a sound and friendly relationship between the tenant and the Council in its role as landlord.

Build strong working relationships with all Housing colleagues, internal and external stakeholders, support services, financial advice agencies and statutory services to enhance the welfare and independence of our tenants. This is a flexible role that will evolve in line with changing demands, systems, processes and legislation.

Key Accountabilities:

Liaise with other agencies on issues relating to housing management and household welfare issues.

Rents

- Rent recovery forms a substantive part of the role.
- Carry out rent arrears recovery in accordance with the Council's rent arrears recovery policy and procedures and meet individual performance targets in order to maximise income
- Be responsible for housing benefit checks and housing benefit cancellation reports including those cases being considered for legal action
- Visit tenants early in the arrears process. Ensure tenants are visited as part of the councils arrears recovery policy and procedure
- Review rent accounts regularly using the computerised records and follow the appropriate recovery action. Pursue and interview tenants regarding their rent arrears preferably through personal contact such as telephone and home visits to prevent notice being served.
- Review rent arrears accounts in accordance with policy, procedure and practices.
- As part of a team identify, contact visit and work with residents affected by legislative changes to help reduce effects of change, maximize income available and refer on for specialist advice.
- Serve legal notices on tenancies as necessary. Recommend, prepare and refer cases for possession proceedings in the to the rent income officer.
- Assist tenants to sustain their tenancies by giving advice and support, then signposting those who are affected by hardship.
- Promote the payment of rent via the Council's payment methods. Assist with year-end activities as required.
- Effectively manage the case load and give priority to cases where tenants are at risk of receiving possession notice.
- Provide welfare and benefit advice in order to maximize income and refer on if

required.

- Provide personal money management, budgeting and debt advice to help clients live within their financial means and refer if required. (Including rent first approach)
- Contact tenants by telephone, text, and letter and meet them face to face in the office and in their homes.
- You will be trained as a direct debit super user and manage your failed direct debits timely.
- Ensure full use of electronic automatic rent systems.
- Be familiar with applicable IT packages.
- Manage individual rent cases and carry out appropriate visits.
- To support and assist tenants who are affected by Universal Credit and welfare reform and refer on for special advice and support if required.
- Work with vulnerable tenants including those in serious debt, tenants with alcohol and drug problems, clients who are disabled, have learning difficulties, or are physically and mentally unwell.
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- To support and assist tenants who are affected by Universal Credit and welfare reform and refer on for special advice and support if required.
- Effectively manage the arrears case load and give priority to cases where tenants are at risk of receiving possession notice.
- Deal with correspondence, including, where appropriate, the return of any information to the Department for Work and Pension and Housing Associations
- Raising awareness of Universal Credit and the effect it has on rent payments with tenant representatives, partner agencies, social services, health etc.

Tenancy management / enforcement

- To work in collaboration with key partner agencies, in order to safeguard residents, refer on for effective enforcement and utilize all tools available when addressing cases of ASB and tenancy breaches.
- To ensure safeguarding issues are addressed as part of a multi-agency approach, make safeguarding referral for residents at immediate risk and help inform a long-term action plan.
- To liaise with other Council service areas and external agencies, and partners in order to develop a suitable joint working response to cases including Complex Case Conference, Child Protection Conferences and TAC meetings as required and cases where adult social care are involved. . Attend mental health case reviews where appropriate.
- Collaborate and work closely with partners to maximize resources and deliver shared outcomes with all partner agencies / charities for the benefit and sustainability of our tenants.
- Deal with breaches of tenancy conditions including investigating cases of anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance, racial harassment (initial investigation),
- Deal with initial investigate and offer front line support for domestic abuse disclosures before referring on to the LNHO.
- Contact and assess with tenants experiencing ASB and refer onto a Housing Enforcement Officer if appropriate
- To support in the resolution of ASB and nuisance problems reported to the council both directly by individuals themselves but also through referrals from third parties such as the Police.
- Initiate the process for access injunctions for gas safety checks and tenancy fraud. Attend Court on behalf of the Council when necessary.
- Investigate requests for assignments, successions, and other amendments to tenancies and recommend approval or refusal with assistance from corporate fraud team.
- Make referrals to other agencies as appropriate for support, specialist advice and services. Keep up to date with available services in the Swindon area to sign post and refer appropriately.

- Carry out tenancy audits/inspections of properties for tenancy management purposes, carry out inspections of communal areas and Housing owned public open spaces to ensure that they are maintained and kept to a reasonable standard.
- Achieve performance targets and service standards for your areas of responsibility.
- Carry out assessments and develop support plans for vulnerable tenants and review according to procedure. (Intensive management)
- Contact tenants by telephone, text, and letter and meet them face to face in the office and in their homes.
- Assist to Influence and persuade tenants to change their lifestyle where risks are identified.
- Promote financial, digital and social inclusion for tenants.
- Direct and signpost tenants to wide range of support and advice services who can provide advice, assistance and affordable services.
- Participate in training to keep abreast of all national and local legislative changes.
- Be familiar with other housing policy and procedures in order to offer the correct advice.
- Work within confidentiality policies and protocols
- Ensure detailed records are kept appropriately and updated.
- Respond to tenants queries, which may require home visits.
- Attend evictions for (tenancy breaches other than rent arrears) where necessary and arrange and deal with the clearance and storage of belongings.
- Carry out pre-tenancy work, which includes new tenancy sign ups.
- Respond to general correspondence as per policy and procedures, and assist in dealing with, and replying to, Councilors, Residents and MP's enquiries and complaints.
- Assist in the process of reviewing temporary and introductory tenancies.

- Be aware and report potentially dangerous or detrimental defects within your working environment.
- Undertake any other duties as allocated by the Neighbourhood Housing Manager appropriate to the grading level of the post.

Supplementary Accountabilities

- To participate in equality and diversity training, information briefings and events as and when required as part of continuous professional development.
- To promote equality and diversity best practice in all areas of work.
- Representing the Council's commitment to tenant participation through actively developing and sustaining links with representative groups.
- Maintaining awareness of the Tenant Participation and, where required, assisting with the achievement of targets and commitments.
- 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 and to undertake a programme of continuous development.
- 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.
- You must ensure you undertake responsibilities relating to your position as detailed within your Directorate Health and Safety Policy.
- Work within agreed confidentiality policies and protocols.
- At times you will be required to work evenings and/or Saturday mornings.
- You will need to have the flexibility and ability to change, as the role entails working in a rapidly changing environment.

NOTE:

This job description is intended as a general guide to the duties attached to the post and is not an inflexible specification. It may therefore be altered from time to time to reflect the changing needs of the department, always in conjunction with the post holder.

Housing is committed to working in a manner, which does not discriminate against any individual or group regardless of ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or gender.

Knowledge & Experience

Candidates must have substantial knowledge and experience in the following areas of business and will be required to provide evidence of this:

Minimum:

- GCSE Grade A-C, or equivalent in English and Maths
- NVQ Level 3 and above / equivalent relevant experience or willingness to undertake NVQ 3 training
- Face to face experience in working with members of the public, including vulnerable people;
- Some understanding of benefits and welfare reforms, including assisting with budgeting;
- Experience of liaising and corresponding with other professionals, using phone, emails, letters and face to face;
- Ability to visit tenants in their home, throughout the Borough of Swindon;
- Must be fluent in the English language (as a requirement of Part 7 of the Immigration Act – for the effective performance of a customer-facing role).

Preferred:

- HNC in Housing or related field or studying for related qualification;
- Experience of working for a Social Housing provider;
- Experience of dealing with people who have complex needs;
- Experience of taking enforcement action in relation to rent and/or anti-social behaviour;
- Working knowledge of the benefit system, such as Universal Credit.

Qualifications

- GCSE Grade A-C, or equivalent in English and Maths (minimum)
- HVQ Level 3 and above or equivalent (minimum)
- HNC in Housing or related field or studying for related qualification (preferred)

Decision Making

- Sharing of information with relevant others
- When to escalate case of ASB, rent arrears or estate management issues
- Make financial arrangements with tenants to clear arrears, recommend cases for legal action.
- Recognise and advise clients about entitlement to benefits.
- You will need to seek advice on complex ASB cases and other Estate and Tenancy matters.
- Decisions made can have financial implication / consequences
- Assessing referrals/cases and deciding best course of action
- Making informed decisions based on data and evidence
- Seeking support from partner agencies in specific cases
- Taking action in respect of tenancy agreement enforcement
- Recommend enforcement/legal action as appropriate
- Under the supervision of the Housing Manager decisions concerning tenancy matters. This may include, but it is not limited to decisions where a tenant has rent arrears, suffers anti-social behaviour or concerning other tenancy management queries).

Creativity and Innovation

- To embrace change and actively participate in service improvement for the benefit of the organisation and its users.
- Finding solutions to complicated estate and tenancy issues needs officers to think outside normal procedures and tools available.
- Expected to be able to consider complex issues relation to the service and contribute to discussion/resolution
- Recognise the need for sometimes seeking alternative solutions to problems.
- Identify possible changes/improvements to working practices.

<p><u>Job Scope</u></p> <p>Number and types of jobs managed None</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgeting and welfare advice • Tenancy management • Supporting teams. <p>Typical tasks supervised/allocated to others</p>	<p>Budget Holder</p> <p>Responsibility</p> <p>Asset Responsibility:</p>	<p>NO</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to specialist staff or external agencies 		
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Contacts and Relationships

(how the role relates to the work of others i.e. officers, groups, committees, general public, members, partner organisations, internal and external contacts of the council)

Internal 30%, External 70%

Internal – Housing Officers, Tenant Representatives, Swindon Commercial Services, Environmental Services, Education, Crime and Disorder, Children and Social Services. Neighbourhood Wardens.

External – Tenants, Contractors, Probation Service, Emergency Services, Police, Debt and other advice agencies.

Produce standard letters but also create ad-hoc ones dealing with more complex cases. Complete forms for self and, where appropriate, on behalf of tenant.

Carry out interviews with tenants and investigate a variety of matters e.g. negotiating payment arrangements, boundary disputes, and Neighbour nuisance.

Health and Safety:

In accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health & 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.

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. You must ensure you undertake responsibilities relating to your position as detailed within your Directorate Health and Safety Policy

Values and Behaviours

We strive to underpin our culture through strong management and authentic leadership, this means getting the management basics right, and ensuring what we commit to individually and collectively,

we own and demonstrate accountability aiming to get things right first time. Building on this we also expect everyone at SBC to demonstrate and live our organisational values and behaviours , this means in our work we are:

Connected: We put Swindon and its people at the heart of everything we do.

We display a communication and behaviour style that promotes a positive Council identity in connecting with residents, customers, colleagues and other stakeholders ensuring a partnership approach to delivering our vision. Always asking, “is what I am doing in the best interests of Swindon and its people,”?

Resilient: We are forward thinking and work smart

We seek to identify where things can be improved, ensuring this learning is embedded, evaluated and built upon through a strong approach to continuous organisational development.

Brave: We respect and work together with our colleagues and customers to achieve success

We act in an emotionally intelligent way, setting positive examples around accountability, risk and governance. This will be delivered through developing ourselves and our teams to achieve the highest possible levels of productivity and performance.

Other Key Features of the role

(working environment / emotional / conditions i.e. regular outside work, unpleasant or hazardous conditions, practical demands such as standing, carrying or working in constrained positions, potential verbal abuse and aggression from people, or risk of injury).

- You will be visiting tenants in their homes throughout the Borough and you must have the ability to do so.
- You are expected to work with vulnerable tenants at times and due to the risk of aggression or abuse you are expected adhere to the lone working policy and risk assessments associated with these tasks.
- Required to work from any base and at any site as directed by the Tenancy Support Manager
- **Data protection:** in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act, jobholders should take reasonable care to ensure that personal data is not disclosed outside the Council procedures, or use personal data held on others for their own purposes. In accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, ensure requests for non-personal information are dealt with in accordance with the Council’s written procedures.

Employee Signature:	Print Name:
Date:	
Line Managers Signature:	Print Name::

Date:	
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