

# Job Description

<b>Job Title:</b> Team Leader (Prevention, Relief, PRS Solutions, Employment & Benefits, Tenancy Sustainment, Move-On)		<b>Service Area:</b> Homelessness Prevention & Advice	
<b>Directorate:</b> Inclusive Economy & Housing		<b>Post Number:</b>	<b>Evaluation Number:</b>
<b>Grade:</b> PO3		<b>Date last updated:</b> January 2021	

## People at the heart of everything we do

We are committed to putting people – Newham residents and Council staff – at the heart of all we do. Our approach is a collaborative joint enterprise between residents, the Mayor, Members, Council staff and the Corporate Management Team.

## Equality and diversity

We are committed to and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of employment with the London Borough of Newham. All employees are expected to understand and promote our Equality and Diversity policy in the course of their work.

## Protecting our staff and services

Adherence to health and safety requirements and proper risk management is required from all employees in so far as is relevant to their role. All employees are expected to understand and promote good health and safety practices and manage risks appropriately.

## Corporate parent

We believe that every member of staff working for Newham Council should understand and fulfil our corporate parenting responsibilities for our looked after children that we have under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

## Overall Purpose of Job

To manage case officers delivering homelessness prevention, ensuring all staff are fully up to date with the provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act, associated Code of Guidance, case law and best practice.

To ensure best practice, in terms of case management, compliance with statutory legislation, access to suitability (including affordability assessments), access to welfare benefits and employment services, (especially where this can result in creating housing options), supporting people to maintain accommodation in order to prevent homelessness, and assisting people to move-on to appropriate accommodation that meets their needs and desires.

To ensure case officers issue tailored Personal Housing Plans in a timely manner, and that *reasonable steps* are completed, and that these are compliant with the regulations and duties set out within the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. To oversee statutory decisions in relation to the Prevention Duty, Relief Duty, and Duty to Co-operate are completed within the timescales set out in the Government Code of Guidance.

To carry out regular 1-2-1s and case audits in order to comply with the requirements set out in the Government Code of Guidance and locally agreed performance indicators, using these to identify areas for training and service improvement, and inform Senior Managers so these can be put into practice.

To ensure the service maintains high levels of good customer care and empathy throughout. We may not always be able to give people what they want, but we should always be honest and treat them with respect, in consideration of their situation.

## Job Summary

To ensure the service is making every conceivable effort to prevent homelessness where possible through the provision of tailored advice, advocacy, negotiation, mediation and exploration of all suitable options. To make sure Housing Advisers and specialist officers are assessing the housing need of complex and vulnerable individuals and families, in accordance with the relevant legislation (eg Housing Act 1996 (as amended), Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Children's Act, Care Act and Welfare Benefit Reform Act), and providing a customer-focussed approach in helping people secure and maintain suitable housing.

The post holder will be required to be innovative, dynamic and solutions focussed, contributing to practices preventing clients from becoming homeless and developing the policies and procedures to support this. In addition, the post holder will input into service design and implement new operating environments to develop the wider Homelessness Prevention and Advice Service.

## Key Tasks and Accountabilities

Key tasks and accountabilities are intended to be a guide to the range and level of work expected of the post holder. This is not an exhaustive list of all tasks that may fall to the post holder and employees will be expected to carry out such other reasonable duties which may be required from time to time.

1. To have responsibility for statutory decisions made by the Council, taking an overview of cases and making sure officers have the appropriate skills and knowledge to address the full range of housing issues faced by individuals and families, many of whom will be vulnerable or with multiple complex needs; supporting them to keep their current home or access alternative, suitable, accommodation.
2. To directly manage officers providing advice and casework services to all households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, adopting a pro-active approach helping people secure alternative, suitable, accommodation, whilst ensuring the Council fulfils its statutory duties in relation to homelessness (and associated) legislation.
3. To ensure, through supervision, 1-2-1 and case audits, that the Council is making the appropriate decisions in terms of the statutory duties upon it; that Personal Housing Plans being produced in a timely manner, including the *reasonable steps* being undertaken by both the client and the Council; and that these are regularly reviewed and in accordance with Government Code of Guidance and caselaw.
4. To build and maintain effective relationships with other professionals, such as Social Workers, Probation Officers, Employment and Money Advice, Domestic Abuse, Asylum Seeker, etc, representing the service at strategic and operational partnerships such as MARAC, MASH and case reviews.
5. To investigate, collate and draft responses to complaints and Member Enquiries and contribute to Ombudsman investigations in order to create an environment of continual learning and service improvement.
6. To ensure the Council delivers an effective, customer-friendly and efficient service, which puts people at its heart, taking into account the vulnerabilities and complex needs faced by many individuals and families faced with homelessness. To do so, whilst being fully compliant with the relevant legislation and caselaw, but seeking innovative and flexible opportunities to prevent and relieve those households from being homeless.
7. To participate as a duty manager as required ensuring the effective use and promotion of homelessness prevention services, authorising temporary accommodation placements where appropriate, and making sure best practice is adopted.
8. To maintain extensive and specialist knowledge of relevant housing legislation, case law and guidance as well as local and national policies in order to provide expert advice and guidance to staff, colleagues, council members as well as partners and stakeholders.
9. To develop and maintain robust performance management arrangements and be responsible for taking appropriate and timely corrective action. To collate performance data, in order for this to be fed into reports and briefings as required.

10. To ensure staff have access to appropriate systems and tools in order for them to fulfil their duties and responsibilities, providing training and guidance where necessary
11. To lead on the day to day management and development of move on, prevention and housing options and coordinate services with health care, young people and prison/probation services to ensure the provision of suitable housing move on solutions for people leaving care or institutions.
12. To help develop a housing options approach to service delivery to customers and partner service providers, using liaison, negotiation and casework skills to assist customers to move into alternative settled accommodation or, where necessary, specialist supported housing.
13. To deliver training and awareness briefings to staff, stakeholders and clients providing expert advice and opinion on homelessness prevention issues, and partake in advice surgeries and meetings. To lead on the delivery of 'tenancy training' and 'housing options' events targeted at clients and captured as 'reasonable steps' within tailored Personal Housing Plans.
14. To coordinate and prepare court papers and attend court on behalf of the council as required to whereby decisions of the Council may be legally challenged or subject to Judicial Review.
15. To lead on the development of proactive procedures, policies and new ways of working aimed at residents effected by the impacts of homelessness, welfare reform and other policy or legislative changes and implementing these new systems and processes.
16. To ensure the service complies with all relevant statutory requirements, Government Guidance and Codes of conduct, Newham policies and procedures, professional and performance standards and good housing and homelessness prevention practice.
17. To build and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues within Newham, other councils and statutory bodies, external agencies, clients and landlords as well as voluntary and other housing organisations.
18. To contribute to a full range of information and publicity for all clients as well as internal procedures. To understand the value of information to the council and to contribute to good information governance by keeping information safe, accurate and up to date and available to those who need it. The post holder is required to abide by the council's information governance policies.

**To undertake all responsibilities listed below:**

19. To be a champion for excellent customer service delivery and customer care and contribute to the development and delivery of an integrated service.
20. To be self-serving with respect to administration, case record keeping and other related duties and utilise IT systems to update and record information required according to guidance and established procedures.
21. To lead on appraisals, one to ones, objective settings, personal development plans and working group meetings and take a full and active role in service development, including service reviews.
22. To carry out the duties of the post in accordance with the Data Protection Act, the Health & Safety at Work Act and other relevant legislation, as well as Council policies, procedures, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
23. To carry out the duties of this post with due regard to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and to actively promote and uphold the Council's HEART values.
24. To take responsibility, appropriate to the post, for ensuring compliance with council policies and procedures aimed at promoting and safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable children and adults.
25. To take responsibility, appropriate to the post for promoting diversity including tackling racism and good race, ethnic & community relations.

26. To undertake any other duties appropriate to the grade, that may be required. These may be varied from time to time to meet the needs of the service.



## Personal Specification

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### IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

The criteria listed in this Person Specification are all essential to the job. Where the Method of Assessment is stated to be the Application Form, your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. If you do not address these criteria fully, or if we do not consider that you meet them, you will not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.

### EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We are committed to and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of employment with the London Borough of Newham. All employees are expected to understand and promote our Equality and Diversity Policy in the course of their work.

### PROTECTING OUR STAFF AND SERVICES

Adherence to Health and Safety requirements and proper risk management is required from all employees in so far as is relevant to their role. All employees are expected to understand and promote good Health and Safety practices and manage risks appropriately.

CRITERIA- Essential	Desirable	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
<p><b>KNOWLEDGE:</b> A comprehensive knowledge of the relevant legislation relating to housing and homelessness, Codes of Guidance and case law.</p> <p>A comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the housing and support needs of homeless and housing applicants and tenants.</p> <p>A full understanding of the housing issues facing a high demand London local authority.</p> <p>A broad knowledge of welfare rights law and practice and specific knowledge of welfare reforms</p>		<p>Application, Test and Interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application</p>

<p><b>EDUCATION/QUALIFICATIONS</b> Educated to degree level standard or equivalent or demonstrable suitable experience</p>		Application
<p><b>SKILLS, ABILITIES &amp; EXPERIENCE:</b> Experience of working within a high quality housing service in a related area for a large local authority or comparable organisation.</p> <p>Experience of monitoring performance, producing reports and analysing data in order to drive service improvements.</p> <p>Experience of leading, motivating and managing a service to achieve significant, sustainable improvements and positive outcomes through internal and external partnerships.</p> <p>Understanding the principles of a prevention and options approach in tackling the issue of homelessness and of coaching and helping staff to use negotiation tools in an advice or advocacy setting.</p> <p>Experience of working within a large, complex, customer-focused organisation with a significant emphasis on performance management.</p> <p>Experience of dealing with complaints and/or Member Enquiries, with demonstrable evidence of using these to enhance service delivery.</p>	<p>At least one year's experience of managing staff.</p>	<p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application and interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application, Test and Interview</p> <p>Application</p>
<p><b>PERSONAL STYLE AND BEHAVIOUR:</b> <u>Focuses on People:</u> Excellent interpersonal skills including active listening, advocacy and a win-win approach with all stakeholders</p> <p><u>Takes Ownership:</u> Proactive in seizing opportunities and takes responsibility for ensuring the best possible outcome for clients</p> <p><u>Works Collaboratively:</u> Ability to gain, and retain, the confidence and respect of staff, service users and other contacts.</p>		<p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p>

<p><u>Communicates Effectively:</u> Excellent communication skills both verbally and in writing, including the ability to produce detailed technical letters and reports.</p> <p><u>Focuses on Results:</u> Ability to gather information and interpret complex issues e.g. legislation and case law quickly, to think creatively about problems and identify solutions.</p> <p><u>Coaching and development:</u> Ability to identify people's strengths and weaknesses and create a supportive environment whereby staff are able to fulfil their potential</p> <p><u>Calmness under pressure:</u> Ability to thrive in a challenging and pressurised environment, with competing service demands and tight deadlines</p> <p><u>Respects and understands individual's needs:</u> Ability to work effectively and even-handedly with people from diverse backgrounds and circumstances, ensuring there are practices in place to reflect this.</p>		<p>Application, Test and Interview</p> <p>Application, Test and Interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p> <p>Application and Interview</p>
<p><b>OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:</b> Willing to work outside normal working hours to respond to emergencies or attend meetings as required.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the issues relating to equal opportunities in service delivery and provision and to actively promote ways of eradicating racism, sexism and other forms of negative discrimination through the Council's policies and procedures.</p> <p>To comply with the Council's Health &amp; Safety Policies.</p>		<p>Application</p> <p>Application</p> <p>Application</p>