

Job Description

Tenancy Sustainment Officer

Final

Date: September 2018

POST:	Tenancy Sustainment Officer
SERVICE:	Housing Choice
SECTION:	Housing Solutions
BAND:	Band 5
REPORTS TO:	Private Rented Sector Team Leader
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	None
TYPE:	Mobile worker within Basildon Council sites and using secure network

All Council posts are subject to National Joint Council (NJC) conditions of service.

Basildon Borough Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all employees, contractors and volunteers to share its commitment to prevent abuse, harm or exploitation.

Please note that the Council applies a robust recruitment vetting process.

*Please note that this post is subject to Department of Works and Pensions (DWP), Protection of National Infrastructure conditions, which means that the post holder will be required to undergo further vetting processes to ensure compliance.

*Please note that this post has been classified by Basildon Council as a Regulated Post as it has contact with vulnerable groups so will require an enhanced Disclosure and Barring {DBS} certificate.

MAIN PURPOSE

The Private Rented Sector Team is part of the Housing Choice Department (the strategic housing service) and sits within the Housing Solutions Service. Its primary function is to prevent homelessness by helping customers find and secure good quality, affordable, long-term settled housing solutions in the private rented sector in order that the Council fulfils its statutory obligations as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

You will be responsible for providing specialist support and assistance to tenants and expert advice to landlords renting and letting through the Council's private sector access schemes. You will undertake mid-tenancy inspections, tenancy sustainment visits and act as the main point of contact for tenants and landlords in order to answer any queries and troubleshoot any issues throughout the life of tenancies created by one of the Council's schemes.

You will support people to set up and sustain their tenancies, encourage and facilitate their independence, enhance their quality of life, health and well-being and assist those with challenging and complex needs by working in partnership with other agencies to establish short-term support plans to help maintain their tenancy.

DUTIES

1. Regularly undertake a comprehensive assessment of private sector tenants' support needs (as early as possible, including at sign up) in order to identify challenges and any issues that could pose a threat to the sustainment of their private rented sector tenancy.
2. Produce and agree a tailored support plan for tenants which outlines personal sensitive information, prioritising pro-active steps to support and sustain their private sector tenancy.
3. Provide expert advice across a whole range of complex issues such as welfare benefits, financial well-being, employment, mental health and substance abuse issues referring customers to specialist agencies for additional assistance where appropriate.
4. Regularly review support plans with tenants and in collaboration with other support agencies to ensure the appropriate type of support remains in place.
5. Arrange and chair multi-agency meetings to discuss individuals in need of wider support where necessary and represent the Local Authority where tenants with complex needs and requirements are at risk of losing their accommodation.
6. Have expert knowledge of Housing Benefit, Welfare Benefits and Universal Credit in order to support and assist tenants with applications for welfare benefits and appeals, including complex housing benefit cases and backdate requests. Support and assist residents with applications for grant funding to maximize income and help to manage urgent financial crises and short or longer-term financial hardship with the aim to maintain and sustain their tenancy and prevent the loss of their home as a result of rent arrears or other related issues.
7. Understand the implications of national legislative changes including the Welfare Benefit Reform and be proactive by taking action to minimize the risks to vulnerable tenants' income and home by maximizing income and assessing the eligibility for welfare benefits and discretionary housing payments.
8. Manage a caseload of tenants, working with each to offer an individual and empowering service.
9. Carry out comprehensive, regular risk assessments and, when appropriate, raise safeguarding alerts to protect and support vulnerable tenants. Follow up by attending case conferences and/or Child Protection meetings to share information and facilitate the effective intervention of a range of services.
10. Work with colleagues and other agencies to develop innovative, creative solutions tailored to meet individual needs and provide effective, efficient support to vulnerable tenants making use of schemes designed to integrate vulnerable tenants into communities to promote community cohesion and prevent social exclusion.
11. Refer vulnerable tenants to external partners and floating support to meet their longer-term support needs and signpost those tenants who are no longer able to live independently to other agencies or different housing solutions.
12. Maintain a thorough and up to date understanding of homeless legislation, Landlord and Tenant Law, The Housing Act 1996 (as amended), the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and welfare benefit regulations.

13. Provide expert and specialist advice to landlords on assured shorthold lettings and all tenancy related issues.
14. Gain and maintain comprehensive knowledge of other statutory and third sector organisations in the local area as well as those that operate nationally with a view to drawing on appropriate practical help and support for customers in housing need.
15. Contribute to the development of working relationships and protocols with internal Council departments as well as external agencies such as Social Services, Probation, Police and local housing providers.
16. Assist with the development and distribution of customer information.
17. Actively contribute to the compilation and collation of management and performance information as required.
18. Have a working knowledge of IT systems in relation to Applications, Allocations, Rent Arrears Management and homelessness prevention and relief ensuring that IT systems are updated with client information at appropriate times.
19. Work from various locations around the borough, primarily conducting interviews and assessment of tenants' support needs in their own homes ensuring that you conduct a risk assessment of each home visit and comply with the stated home visit procedure relevant to the work activity.
20. Any other duties appropriate to the post: These other duties must be equivalent to or below the salary and status of the role and, where appropriate, under the Equality Act 2010, due consideration must be given to any employees with a "protected characteristic".
21. Undertake all the duties within the framework of Equal Opportunities
22. You must cooperate in all matters relating to Health and Safety and implement all procedures for your job role. The identification of Health and Safety related risks within the working environment must be highlighted to your management.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Position Title:	Tenancy Sustainment Officer	Date Prepared:	September 2018
Department:	Housing Choice	Band:	5

AF= Application Form	I = Interview	T= Test
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	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
1.	EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE			
1.1	Proven experience of working in a frontline customer focussed environment.	✓		AF/I
1.2	Demonstrable experience of working in the public sector housing field or similar environment.		✓	AF/I
1.3	Demonstrable experience of mediation skills particularly around where a tenancy may be at risk		✓	AF/I
1.4	Proven experience of working in an environment where the client may have multiple or complex needs	✓		AF/I
1.5	Experience of using IT applications, including, word processing, spread sheets and databases	✓		AF/I
1.6	Experience of developing and sustaining effective working relationships and communications, both internally and externally	✓		AF/I
2.	KNOWLEDGE			
2.1	An understanding and awareness of housing issues, the initiatives designed to tackle and prevent homelessness, and of government policy relating to housing need and homelessness	✓		AF/I/T
2.2	Knowledge of Housing Act 1996 (as amended), Localism Act 2011, Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 included related Codes of Guidance and case law.	✓		AF/I/T
2.3	Awareness of a range of available housing options and support services.	✓		AF/I/T
2.4	Demonstrate a good working knowledge of Landlord and Tenant Law particularly in relation to Assured Shorthold Tenancies including landlords repairing obligations and grounds for possession	✓		AF/I
2.5	Have specialist knowledge and understanding of working with Housing Benefit Regulations and Universal Credit Regulations and the eligibility requirements for these benefits	✓		AF/I
3.	EDUCATION AND TRAINING			

	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
3.1	GCSE or equivalent indicating an aptitude for mathematics and English language (Grades A-C)	✓		AF/T
4.	OTHER			
4.1	An understanding of, and commitment to the Council's equal opportunities policy.	✓		AF/I
4.2	Ability to travel around the borough	✓		AF/I
5.	COMPETENCIES			
	WORKING WITH PEOPLE			
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Demonstrates an interest in and understanding of others b) Adapts to the team and builds team spirit c) Recognises and rewards the contribution of others d) Listens, consults others and communicates proactively e) Supports and cares for others f) Develops and openly communicates self-insight such as an awareness of own strengths and weaknesses 	✓		AF/I/T
	RELATING AND NETWORKING			
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Establishes good relationships with customers and staff b) Builds wide and effective networks of contacts inside and outside the organisation c) Relates well to people at all levels d) Manages conflict e) Use humour appropriately to enhance relationships with others 	✓		AF/I/T
	CREATING AND INNOVATING			
5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Produces new ideas, approaches or insights b) Creates innovative products or designs c) Produces a range of solutions to problems d) Seeks opportunities for organisational improvement e) Devises effective change initiatives 	✓		AF/I/T
	PLANNING AND ORGANISING			
6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sets clearly defined objectives b) Plans activities and projects well in advance and takes account of possible changing circumstances c) Manages time effectively d) Identifies and organises resources needed to accomplish tasks e) Monitors performance against deadlines and milestones 	✓		AF/I/T

	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
7.2	<p>COPING WITH PRESSURES AND SETBACKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Works productively in a high pressure environment b) Keeps emotions under control during difficult situations c) Balances the demands of work life and personal life d) Maintains a positive outlook at work e) Handles criticism well and learns from it 	✓		AF/I