Applying for Jobs at Your Homes Newcastle

YHN is committed to being an Equal Opportunities employer and promotes Equality and Diversity

About YHN

What is Your Homes Newcastle?
We are an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO), set up to manage and improve Newcastle City Council’s homes.

Your Homes Newcastle:

• came into being on 1 April 2004
• is a not-for-profit organisation 100 percent owned by Newcastle City Council
• manages over 30,000 homes
• employs over 900 staff.

Why were we set up?
Newcastle City Council looked at the different ways it could raise extra money to improve council homes. It decided that the best way to ensure additional income was to set up an ALMO – Your Homes Newcastle, which is independent and run by its own Board.

We were successful in bidding to the Government for additional funding to improve council homes. This was conditional on achieving at least a “good” rating which we did when the Government inspected us at the end of 2004. This extra money was a huge incentive to improve the services we deliver to customers.

In April 2008 we were inspected again by the Audit Commission. We achieved a three star rating and were recognised as an “excellent three star service which has excellent prospects for improvement.” This ensured that we were in a stronger position to expand our services and become much more than a housing provider.

Why work for YHN?

We are committed to making YHN a great place to work, so as well as competitive salaries we offer a range of benefits to all of our staff.

Work life balance
We are committed to introducing policies that will enable employees to achieve a balance between work and caring or family responsibilities; benefiting both us and you!

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED
Pension scheme
We have a final salary pension scheme which you can join as soon as you start with us. The contribution figures change each year, but generally you will contribute a third of the scheme’s cost, and we will contribute the rest.

Annual leave
We offer very generous leave entitlement that takes account of previous service at YHN or continuous service from certain other employers, leading to a maximum of 28 days leave per year.

Flexi time
Our flexi system aims to allow flexible working. With no core times, you can work at any time during office opening hours (typically 07.00 until 19.00, subject to business needs). Once you have worked your contracted weekly hours, any additional time worked can be taken as ‘flexi’ time.

Where possible flexi time can be used to take a little extra time off work, or to enable you to start a little later or finish earlier. You can also use your time to take up to 2 days flexi leave in any 4 week period.

Development
We have an in-house training team dedicated to developing programmes that will help you both personally and professionally. When you join us, you will take part in an induction programme and will also be enrolled in various training programmes that we run throughout the year.

We offer you a range of opportunities to learn and develop including our Mentoring Scheme. We have a number of work-based ‘mentors’ who can share the benefits of their experience and knowledge by giving you guidance on your personal and career development.

Continuous service
When joining YHN, if you qualify for continuous service, any time you spent with a local authority organisation or any other organisation which recognises continuous service will be added to your time in employment with us.
Your Homes Newcastle uses competency as a framework for assessment in recruitment and selection. The Competencies section in our online application form asks you to give details of how you meet the key competencies for the role that you are applying for.

What is a competency?

A competency describes the skills and behaviour needed to effectively perform in a role. All of YHN’s job descriptions detail the Core Competencies that are required in all of our jobs. These competencies are split into:

Organisational Competencies (Apply to all YHN roles and employees):
- Personal
- People
- Business
- Management (This will only be relevant if the role has management responsibility)

Position Specific Competency (Apply to the specific job that you are applying for or employed in):
- Technical

You will notice that you have more space for the Technical competency this is so you can demonstrate fully how you meet the requirements specifically for the role you are applying for.

What does the symbol mean on the Job Description?

In addition to the competencies, applicants should demonstrate that they possess an understanding of the five core values (highlighted with a symbol on the job description). The five core values are:

- **Accountability** – acts openly and takes responsibility
- **Integrity** – acts fairly and honestly
- **Passion** – works positively and with enthusiasm
- **Respect** – treats everyone with care and professionalism
- **Forward-thinking** – proactively seeks improvements and solutions
How to answer a competency based question

A competency could be knowledge, attitudes, skills, values, or behaviours which can be acquired through talent, experience, or training. Ideally, examples should be from your workplace experiences but can include: voluntary work, sports and social activities, family life, education etc.

A good way of answering competency based questions is by using the CAR approach. CAR stands for Context, Action, and Result.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Forms an introduction, describing the scenario you faced, date and place.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>What action did you take? Try not to focus on what the group or team did without making clear what your own contribution was.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td>Forms the conclusion. What results did you achieve? What did you learn from the experience?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>In my current role, I tend to have lots of competing deadlines and found that as a result, some deadlines were not being achieved.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>I decided to review my work practices, and suggested implementing a ‘traffic light’ prioritisation system; labelling tasks as red, amber or green depending upon their urgency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td>My ideas were accepted and implemented by my whole team, and I now find that I (and my colleagues) are now managing to hit 100% of our deadlines.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How you will be scored
You will be scored 0 – 4 on each competence, as follows:

- 0 - Does not meet requirements
- 1 - Partially meets requirements
- 2 - Meets most requirements
- 3 - Fully meets requirements
- 4 - Exceeds requirements

The Technical Competence score will include other aspects from the application such as previous employment.

Remember when answering the competency based questions not to just say what you can do but tell us about what you have done!