



## **Job profile**

# **Private Rented Housing Officer**

## **Salary: Grade H**

**Fixed Term to 30 September 2020 (there is potential for this to be extended)**

**Group:** Communities and Environment

**Service:** Development, Transport and Public Protection

**Location:** Civic Centre

**Line Manager:** Senior Environmental Health Officer

**Car User Status:** Casual

### **Job Purpose**

Gateshead Council has a dedicated Private Sector Housing Team, made up of Environmental Health Officers, Technical Officers and administrative support. The Team works across a broad range of housing related issues to improve private sector housing conditions, and to tackle noise and anti social behaviour and nuisances.

We are looking for a Private Rented Housing Officer to join the team. The role will focus on preventing homelessness that is caused by the coming to an end of a private tenancy and will include proactive and responsive housing inspections and using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to inform enforcement decisions, taking enforcement action, and supporting those affected by poor housing conditions or landlord and tenant disputes in conjunction with other services and agencies.

### **The key roles of this post will include:**

1. Offering advice and support to landlords and tenants about tenancy related matters, including disputes about standards, affordability of rent, or behaviour that is causing the tenant to be at risk of becoming homeless.
2. Inspection of homes using the Housing health and Safety Rating System and taking all forms of housing related enforcement action to improve housing standards and to tackle rogue landlords; action will include preparing and issuing formal notices and orders, and gathering and presenting evidence in court.
3. Monitoring of service demand from private rented tenants and targeting action towards those landlords about whose portfolio tenants have most cause for complaint. This will include targeted and proactive inspections of those private rented homes most likely to be of a poor standard, and most likely to be occupied by the most vulnerable, and meetings in the home with those tenants to provide upfront tenancy support at the outset of their tenancy.
4. Working with other council services and external agencies to identify landlords whose tenants most frequently present to the Council as homeless, and to lead



on engagement with those landlords to encourage good property and tenancy management practices.

5. Being a central point for advice for the Private Sector Housing Team and other Council services in matters of landlord and tenant law, to ensure everyone is in the best possible position to help tenants whose tenancies are threatened.
6. To maintain links with external agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Shelter, GP practices, Mental Health workers, drug and alcohol support services and in-house services including Families Gateshead, Tenancy Support and Adult Social Care so that this expertise can be used to best effect to prevent and relieve instances of homelessness.
7. Design of methodology, protocols and procedures for monitoring and recording of private sector housing team activity that prevents and relieves instances of homelessness, and provision of this information to contribute to data returns to Government.
8. Monitoring and updating information systems, production of reports and statistical information, provision of professional advice to management and attendance at meetings as required.
9. Management of a personal caseload to ensure customer satisfaction and compliance with Service policies and procedures.
10. Undertaking out of hours work as and when required.
11. Maintenance of an up to date professional knowledge of appropriate legal, technical and social issues to ensure the delivery of an effective quality service
12. Such other responsibilities allocated which are appropriate to the grade of the post.



## Knowledge & Qualifications

### Essential:

#### Knowledge

- Current and emerging private sector housing related legislation, in particular the technical aspects of housing related enforcement.
- Law relating to private rented tenancies and landlords and tenants rights and responsibilities
- Computer literate e.g. Microsoft applications.

#### Experience

- Property inspection
- Working with landlords and tenants to resolve disputes and to help tenants to maintain their tenancies
- Taking enforcement action
- Working with colleagues and external agencies to solve housing and homelessness related problems.
- Planning, organising, investigating and analysing varied and complex information to draw conclusions and make recommendations for action.
- Communicating on different levels and experience of customer service
- Designing, managing, leading and improving systems of work

#### Qualifications

- A Level 4 Qualification, such as an HNC
- Current driving licence or means to mobility support

### Desirable:

#### Experience

- Experience of working in a Local Authority private sector housing team or preventing homelessness service
- Rent Repayment Orders and taking action to recover enforcement action related debts owed to the Council.
- Taking action using the provisions of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977 and other housing and landlord law.
- Working under pressure and with minimum direct supervision



## Qualifications

- Degree/Diploma in an accredited Environmental Health Course
- Have achieved or be working towards Certificate of Registration with the Environmental Health Officers Registration Board
- Certificate of competency in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Qualification in letting or property management



## Competencies

### Customer Focus

Puts the customer first and provides excellent service to both internal and external customers

### Communication

Uses appropriate methods to express information in a clear and concise way to make sure people understand

### Team Working

Works with others to achieve results and develop good working relationships

### Making things happen

Takes responsibility for personal organisation and achieving results

### Flexibility

Adapts to change and works effectively in a variety of situations

### Learning and Development

Actively improves by developing and applying new skills and knowledge and learns from past experiences