

WHERE  
CAREERS  
THRIVE

When potential  
is unlocked,  
talent *thrives*



West  
Northamptonshire  
Council

Job description and person specification

## Housing Options Officer

Housing Solutions, Communities & Opportunities

Thank you for your interest in this role. Our vision at West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is: 'to make West Northants a great place to live, work, visit and thrive'.

We truly stand by this and work hard every day to make this a reality, and at WNC it's about our people. People who thrive with ambition, bring new ideas, demand better ways of working, care about every detail, and who never shy away from a challenge.

Our culture is a gateway for new experiences. A place to forge new opportunities. To empower you in your career and unite you with like-minded people. When potential is unlocked, talent thrives.



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## **Purpose and impact:**

To work with the Housing Options Team Leaders in order to fulfil the Council's statutory obligation to the homeless under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the homelessness Act 2002) and Localism Act 2011. Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (allocations). To assist in the service delivery and statutory duties, powers, and policies of the Housing Options Team.

## **Accountable to:**

This role is accountable to the Housing Options Team Leaders. The role sits within the Housing Solutions Service, part of the Communities & Opportunities Directorate in West Northamptonshire Council.

## **Responsibilities:**

1. Receive and assess homeless applications, manage a caseload, and carry out investigations into homelessness within the framework of the Housing Act 1996 Part VII (Homelessness) and make formal decisions. Refer customers to other sources of assistance where appropriate e.g. social care and health, lettings agencies, community and voluntary advice organisations.
2. Prevent and relieve homelessness, providing advice, guidance, and assistance on the range of options available to resolve clients housing needs. Produce personal housing plans for applicants approaching for advice and assistance, conducting home visits as appropriate.
3. Respond to correspondence, answer telephone enquiries, and conduct personal interviews, ensuring that computer and manual records are maintained and updated as necessary, to ensure that accurate, timely information is available.
4. To process housing register applications, assess applicants' eligibility and needs. Advertise void properties and run shortlist reports to provide suitable offers and nominations to Registered Providers for properties becoming available, whilst taking due account of community issues, sensitive lettings, and neighbourhood tensions
5. To organise and administer the letting of temporary accommodation to clients whom the authority has a duty to accommodate, making assessments to identify the most appropriate placement for the specific household. Monitoring and taking appropriate action on licence arrears, antisocial behaviour, etc. Involvement in bringing empty properties back in to use.
6. Keep abreast of changes to Local and Central Government legislation and policy covering housing issues, including primary legislation and case law. Work independently but within the framework of policy and legislation.
7. Assist in the implementation of new legislation, support new initiatives within the service, other teams within the Council, and statutory and voluntary agencies e.g. Environmental Health, Housing Benefit, Care & Repair, Job Centre, and Social Services. Meet performance targets and support the delivery of service priorities.

8. To maximise personal productivity, minimise duplication and errors; and manage our information efficiently and securely to reduce risk, through effective use of Office 365 and our internal IT systems and applications.
9. Actively challenge and seek to eliminate any directly or indirectly discriminatory practice or behaviours.
10. Demonstrate awareness and understanding of other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs and ensure that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

## Person specification:

The requirements for the role are outlined below and will be part of the selection process. Each of the criteria listed below will be measured by:

(**A**) Application Form, (**T**) Test, (**I**) Interview, (**P**) Presentation, (**D**) Documentation.

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills experience and qualifications required for this job.

| Skills and abilities:  | Essential / Desirable | Measured by |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|
| Ability to interpret and explain complex legislation and guidance, to a variety of audiences, and to make clear, consistent decisions.   | E                     | A/I         |
| An effective problem-solver with an organised and imaginative approach to work and the ability to manage difficult situations.           | E                     | A/I         |
| Ability to develop close professional relationships with colleagues and other professionals to generate positive outcomes for customers. | E                     | A/I         |
| Ability to work well under pressure, prioritise work and meet tight deadlines.   | E                     | A/I         |
| Ability to work in a methodical manner, manage time, maintain accurate records, and respond promptly to enquiries.                       | E                     | A/I         |
| Excellent written and verbal communications and use of English language.   | E                     | A/I         |
| Ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team  | E                     | A/I         |
| Demonstrate effective use of Office 365 (incl. Teams, OneDrive, etc.) or willingness to undertake training during the probation period.  | E                     | A/I         |

| Knowledge:  | Essential / Desirable | Measured by |
|---|-----------------------|-------------|
| An understanding and awareness of current challenges around housing and homelessness.   | E                     | A/I         |
| A good understanding and knowledge of current housing/homeless legislation, the Code of Guidance, good practice, and case-law   | D                     | A/I         |
| An understanding of the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the need to ensure accurate data entry for the purpose of producing statistical returns. | E                     | A/I         |

| Relevant experience:   | Essential / Desirable | Measured by |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|
| Experiencing of working in a social housing environment.               | D                     | A           |
| Experience of dealing with the public providing advice and/or support. | D                     | A           |

| Education, training and work qualifications:                                   | Essential / Desirable | Measured by |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|
| Educated to degree level.  | D                     | A           |
| Current driving licence and access to a vehicle insured for business purposes. | D                     | A           |

All appointments are subject to standard pre-employment screening. This will include identity, references, proof of right to work in the UK, medical clearance, and verification of certificates.

**Additional pre-employment checks specific to this role include:**

Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

## Day-to-day in the role:

|  |                 |                               |                            |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Hours:</b>                            | 37              | <b>Primary work base:</b>     | The Guildhall, Northampton |
| <b>Job family band:</b>                  | RT07            | <b>Worker type:</b>           | Part-flexible              |
| <b>Salary range:</b>                     | £36,734-£39,278 | <b>Budget responsibility:</b> | None                       |
| <b>People management responsibility:</b> | None            |                               |                            |

### Working conditions & how we work:

We are open to discussions about flexible working.

This role has been identified as a part-flexible worker type, this means that you will be able to work from other work locations and when not working from an office you will be working remotely for up to 3 days a week (including from home).

## Our organisational values and behaviours

Everything we want to achieve for West Northants depends on having the right people in place and doing the right things and we want all colleagues to THRIVE, both personally and professionally. Our values and our behaviours framework underpin how we work and what partners and customers can expect from us. We want to do our very best for our residents, service users and businesses and for our staff – we want everyone to THRIVE.

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>T</b> Trust           | we are honest, fair, transparent, and accountable. We can be trusted to do what we say we will.  |
| <b>H</b> High Performing | we get the basics right and what we do, we do well. We manage our business efficiently.  |
| <b>R</b> Respect         | we respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional and supportive environment.   |
| <b>I</b> Innovate        | we encourage curiosity, we are creative and seize opportunities to grow individually as an organisation and as an area.  |
| <b>V</b> Value           | we continually strive for best practice and ways of improving existing procedures, practices and systems and thereby promoting efficiency and cost effectiveness |
| <b>E</b> Empower         | we believe in people, will listen, learn, and trust them to make decisions. We help people to realise their ambitions.   |

**“Valuing colleagues as individuals and encompassing our different perspectives to deliver our collective ambitions. One West inclusive culture”**

# When potential is unlocked, talent *thrives*

Choose a career that offers you a true sense of achievement, fills you with pride and challenges you in a positive way, everyday.

## The benefits of a career at WNC include:

- **People** are at the centre of everything we do. Without our people, we wouldn't be able to deliver services to the people in our community.
- **Ambition** runs through everything we do at West Northants Council, we nurture and develop our people's ambition and willingness to succeed, to continually improve the service we provide to the community.
- **Care** is at the heart of West Northants Council, we care in so many ways; seen and unseen, helping our colleagues and community to thrive.
- **Flexibility** is key, we know work-life balance is critical to wellbeing, so we work hard to make sure our benefits package promotes and improves wellbeing; from annual leave, sick pay, family leave and flexible working, financial security offered by a local government pension scheme and life assurance, and discount schemes which make a difference to your day-to-day life, through to employee helplines offering free legal, health, financial and wellbeing advice and support.

We want you to have balance and be happy.

