

WHERE
CAREERS
THRIVE

When potential
is unlocked,
talent *thrives*



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Job description and person specification

Housing Options Triage Officer

Housing Solutions, Communities and Opportunities



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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.

Purpose and impact:

To be the first point of contact in a customer focused front line Housing Solutions Service providing timely and sometimes immediate housing advice to customers on a range of housing options, providing information, guidance and signposting on available benefits and services.

To provide excellent homelessness prevention advice and assistance to customers on a range of housing solutions, including social housing, shared ownership, low-cost home ownership, disabled adaptations, mediation, supported housing and the private rented sector.

Accountable to:

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

Responsibilities:

1. To be the first point of contact for all housing need enquiries that cannot be dealt with by Customer Services Team and are referred into the service for an initial assessment of the housing need of the approaching household.
2. Provide homelessness prevention advice to customers on housing options including social housing, shared ownership, other forms of low-cost home ownership, disabled adaptations, family mediation, supported housing and how to access private rented housing e.g. rent deposit schemes, discretionary housing payments, homeless prevention fund and charitable support.
3. To co-ordinate and provide responses to all housing need & housing options queries including emails, housing register correspondence, phone calls, temporary accommodation queries and resettlement queries.
4. To ascertain whether a household should apply to join the Council's Housing Register or if there is a risk of homelessness and make referrals to the Housing Solutions Team if the household is at risk of homelessness within 56 days.
5. To make timely and accurate records of all action in relation to client casework and to ensure client files on the IT system are clear, up to date and comprehensive. To follow case management procedures and processes ensuring the correct standards are followed.
6. To assess and respond to all referrals received under the 'Duty to Refer' arrangements, ensuring that appropriate advice and support is provided, or the referral is escalated to Housing Solutions Team.
7. Maintain an extensive, up-to-date, in-depth knowledge of housing allocations and homelessness legislation, codes of guidance, case law and share learning with colleagues to ensure that the Council meets its relevant statutory obligations towards households approaching the service in terms of opportunity to join the Council's Housing register and/or any homelessness duties owed to them.
8. Work with other Council services and external voluntary and statutory bodies to identify housing need and ensure that the Council's Housing Allocations Policy and/or homelessness legislation is applied correctly to meet need. Key stakeholders include Children's Trust, Adult Social Care, Probation and Police.
9. 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.
10. Actively challenge and seek to eliminate any directly or indirectly discriminatory practice or behaviours.

11. 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
Excellent communication skills – ability to convey information accurately, tact, diplomacy, and the ability to deal with a range of customers with differing needs.	E	A, I
Ability to accurately record and maintain sensitive information relating to an individual's personal housing circumstances.	E	A, I
Demonstrate ICT skills sufficient to maximise the use of software applications, particularly the use of Excel, Case Management and Housing Allocations and Homelessness Software packages	E	A, I
Excellent organisation skills with the ability to manage and prioritise workloads.	E	A, I, T
Flexibility to occasionally work outside of normal working hours and able and willing to travel to and work from other locations	E	A, I
Fully understands their role in the context of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, in a housing environment.	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
A working knowledge and understanding of current housing law, such as the Housing Act 1996, Parts VI and VII, Homelessness Act 2002, Localism Act 2012, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and immigration law as it applies to housing eligibility, relevant code of guidance and case law.	E	A, I
Excellent understanding of The Data Protection Act 2018.	E	A, I

Relevant experience:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Experience of working in a housing, customer service and advocacy and advice setting.	E	A, I, T
Experience of using housing allocations and homelessness case management systems.	E	A, I
Extensive experience of managing and handling sensitive data and information in line with Data Protection processes and regulations.	E	A, I

Education, training, and work qualifications:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Good general education with minimum GCSE C or equivalent in English and Maths, or equivalent.	E	A, I
Chartered Institute of Housing qualification Level 2	D	A, I

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.

Day-to-day in the role:

Hours:	37 hours per week	Primary work base:	One Angel Square
Job family band:	Regulatory and Technical, Pay Band 5	Worker type:	Part-Flexible
People management responsibility:	Nil		

Working conditions & how we work:

This role has been identified as a flexible worker type; this means that you will be able to carry out the majority (3 days plus) of your work remotely.

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.

T	Trust	We are honest, fair, transparent, and accountable. We can be trusted to do what we say we will.
H	High Performing	we get the basics right and what we do, we do well. We manage our business efficiently.
R	Respect	we respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional, and supportive environment.
I	Innovate	we encourage curiosity, we are creative and seize opportunities to grow individually as an organisation and as an area.
V	Value	We continually strive for best practice and ways of improving existing procedures, practices and systems and thereby promoting efficiency and cost effectiveness
E	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”

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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.

