

ROLE PROFILE

Job family	Community Engagement	Role profile number	CEO9-2217	Grade I
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Job purpose: Assist customers / visitors to utilise a facility or service, providing advice and information.

Grade I posts are higher in 'Decisions' with the requirement for decisions on less well established situations where only general guidelines are available to support the decision making process. This level of post will require postholders to be working towards a professional qualification in a relevant field.

Factor	Relevant Job Information
Supervision and/or Management of People	Will provide advice, guidance and support to colleagues / volunteers to ensure whole team achievements are met.
Indicative qualifications	HNC or equivalent experience/skills. ITQ 2 or equivalent skill and ability. Working towards relevant professional qualification. Licence / certificate / qualification required for the role.
Knowledge and Skills	High level of relevant and practical experience acquired on. An advanced understanding of relevant procedures and working practices. Advanced knowledge of specialist function relevant to service area. Excellent ICT skills including use of Microsoft applications and specialist systems Good communication and interpersonal skills. Good customer service skills with experience of resolving customer enquires in the relation to the service area. Experience of working with the public in a customer facing / contract role. Relevant practical experience working as part of team to meet service standards, targets and deadlines Good planning and organisational skills, with proven ability to use initiative, prioritise workloads and achieve deadlines Good literacy and numeracy skills
Creativity and Innovation	Work on own initiative to manage own activities and contribute to longer term activities / plans. Creativity and innovation is a feature of the job along with ability to interpret general guidelines to resolve issues. Maintain and improve operational efficiency and quality of service of own area through recommending improvements in procedures / process / protocols. Proactively develop professional knowledge, skills and behaviours. Represent specialist area internally and / or externally to put Council view and respond to enquiries. Support and develop volunteers as required Contribute to the delivery of projects as part of a project team. Monitor and report on service standards within specialist areas as required. Identify issues for further review by manager Create documents and other materials to support / promote the service area
Contacts and Relationships	Providing more specialist / professional advice and guidance where the situation and outcome are not straightforward or well established. Involves supporting or guiding colleagues / customers / volunteers / stakeholders on issues relevant to the service area. Deal with people at all levels confidently, sensitively and diplomatically. Be first point of contact on a range of queries from customers, visitors, volunteers. Will be dealing with challenging situations where influence could be required. Regular contacts will include: colleagues, managers, partners, customers, volunteers, members of the public, and stakeholders. Co-operate with and support colleagues, supervisors and where relevant volunteers

Decisions – Discretion & Consequences	<p>Using general guidelines and utilising a wide range of relevant information, make decisions where advice is not readily available.</p> <p>Assess the options and take appropriate action, where only general guidelines exist. Decisions to ensure outcomes are achieved which serve the best needs of the customer and as a consequence can result in improved services.</p> <p>The consequences of the decisions will have a material effect on the service.</p> <p>Collate, record, process and analyse information and compile reports using the appropriate systems.</p> <p>Support the development and delivery of team plans.</p> <p>Support the design and delivery of communications / promotional / engagement events and activities as appropriate</p>
Resources	Little or no responsibility for physical or financial resources
Work Demands	Work subject to interruptions and at times may be competing demands of work priorities
Work Environment	<p>Work potentially involving some risks due to nature of activities being provided and / or environment or public / customers.</p> <p>May involve lone working and dealing with anti-social behaviour.</p>
Our Identity	<p>Our Identity sets out who we are and provides a shared understanding of how we are all expected to lead, work and act with each other, our partners and our residents to deliver our services and build stronger communities. They enable us to continually evolve and adapt to meet the changing needs of our residents and ensure that we continue to deliver great services and make a difference to the people of Wiltshire.</p> <p>All of us are expected to demonstrate the ten elements of Our Identity in how we work to shape and create the organisation we want to be part of. It should influence our decisions, activities, projects and ways of working</p>
Skill Profile	To be demonstrating level 1 “proficient” across the skill area of communication & customer service.
Health & Safety	All employees are required to carry out all duties and responsibilities with reasonable care for the health and safety of self and others and report any potential hazards or unsafe practices to their line manager
Equalities	Wiltshire council is committed to ensuring employees do not discriminate against colleagues, suppliers or third parties at work or harass or victimise others. Incidents of discrimination at work are taken seriously and employees are encouraged to report incidents via their manager or anonymously via the whistleblowing policy .
Authority to work in the UK	All employees must have the legal authority to work in the UK. Non-EU nationals must have the relevant approval to work in the UK from the UK Border Agency. Copies of all documents provided as proof of identity are retained for our records, by providing these proofs the council will treat this as consent.

The above profile is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by employees in this role and does not detail a list of all duties and responsibilities. The Council reserves the right to amend this role profile as necessary

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role description:	Housing Case worker	
Role profile family:	Community Engagement	
Role profile number and grade:	CE09-2217	Grade I
Number of posts:	30 fte	
Service/Team:	Housing Solutions	
Reports to:	Housing Solutions Team Leader	

Job Family overview

Community Engagement job family overview:

Provision of assistance, instruction and information to groups and individuals using Council services and facilities

- Facilities reception
- Provides information to the public
- Advice and support to use services, resources and community facilities
- Regular interface with public with a 'customer' emphasis
- Promotion and encouragement to use facilities/services

Service / function context

The overall responsibilities of the service/function are:

The Housing Solutions service is responsible for ensuring that all customers are provided with a holistic assessment of their housing-related needs and robust housing advice at first point of contact. All options should be explored until a solution can be found to ensure that customers of Wiltshire are in homes that are suitable, secure, and affordable.

The service is responsible for a diverse range of statutory services, from basic housing advice, assessing a customer's banding on the Housing Register to following through on the homeless statutory framework always ensuring that we comply with the codes of guidance, legislation and caselaw around housing, homelessness, and allocations.

Alongside other teams, this service is responsible for ensuring that everyone has access to a sustainable and secure home. The post holder will have several pressures ranging from legislative through to managing budgets and dealing with technical and contentious complaints.

For the 2020/21 year, the service had a total footfall across all three hubs of 1,900pa and this is a radical reduction from around 18,000pa pre covid. Our revised working practices mean we no longer

see clients in reception as our new service is predominantly home-based and most customers' needs are met through phone and email contact. In the same year we made 1,489 homeless assessments, of which 1,433 were owed a Prevention Duty and 498 owed a relief duty.

The council currently receives (in early 2022) an average of about 750 housing applications each month but with a holistic approach and revised working practices the council expects to see this radically reduced as social housing should not be the default or only option. As well as receiving new housing applications, the service carries out around 2000 assessments or re-assessments and renewals each year. In light of the Housing Register having grown by about one third in the last 2 years, joining the Housing Register is not the only solution to housing need, with improving housing circumstances and tenancy sustainability in the present home, the private rented sector and low cost home ownership viable options for many people in housing need.

Job Purpose

This role is to work with the public to address their housing need by sympathetically interviewing and assessing their household's housing requirements and tailoring advice and information that best addresses their issues. This may include advice around low-cost home ownership and other forms of home ownership, working with landlords to overcome issues/barriers to renting in the private sector, assessing a household as eligible for the council's social housing register or recognising a homelessness role as part of the duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The role, above all, will be to prevent homelessness and provide a fully rounded approach to housing solutions for customers.

Specific duties and responsibilities include:

Housing Advice

- Responding to the inquiries of customers, internal and external, who require free, independent advice and information on all housing-related issues, ensuring compliance with the Council's policies and procedures
- Communicating well with customers, strongly focusing on their housing concerns, the improvement of their housing conditions, the development of greater independence and the prevention of homelessness by offering timely, bespoke, good quality and consistent housing advice
- Advising customers in a timely way on all housing solutions appropriate to their personal circumstances, including improving the current housing conditions to relieve their housing need
- Providing housing costs and money management advice and appropriately signposting to specialist services individuals experiencing financial issues, debt and/or welfare rights problems
- Appropriately identifying and referring customers with tenancy sustainment issues to internal tenancy sustainment services for in-depth upstream advice and support
- Under the Council's safeguarding responsibilities, identifying and making appropriate and timely referrals to the MASH or Advice & Contact to support a customer's wellbeing, safety and independence
- Maintaining and efficiently managing a demanding case load with competing demands, effectively prioritising and re-prioritising cases as necessary to ensure that customers receive attention appropriate to their needs

- Ensuring, alongside other team members, that inquiries receive a prompt response, taking part in a rota to cover telephone and digital workstreams
- Working to develop strong partnerships with colleagues and stakeholders in the local community, statutory and third sector agencies, private landlords and letting agents alike
- Working with other agencies and statutory and third sector bodies to raise awareness of the housing challenges and options for residents of Wiltshire and help implement any education or advice programmes in the community
- Attending on behalf of housing and be involved in decision making at MAPPA, MARAC, DACC, Rough Sleeper Operational Panel and CIN/safeguarding meetings to ensure we meet our statutory requirement to co-operate
- Using the council's homelessness prevention fund appropriately, effectively and in accordance with reporting requirements to relieve housing stress in particular cases
- Being aware at all times of the imbalance of power between the local authority and private individuals

Housing Allocations

- Sensitively interviewing prospective housing applicants in unsuitable, insecure or unaffordable housing and advising them about the solutions available make their homes suitable, secure and affordable
- As part of holistic assessments of customers' housing needs, assessing their eligibility to join the council's allocations scheme, supporting them to make the relevant application and provide the necessary supporting information and documentation for their housing need to be assessed
- Making timely and appropriate inquiries to inform housing needs assessments under the Council's Allocation Policy and Part VI Housing Act 1996, liaising as necessary with landlords, social care professionals, clinicians and other professionals and determining any tenancy sustainment issues in particular cases. These assessments are based on the whole household's needs and can be complex, the statutory decisions the postholder makes on behalf of the Council being challengeable
- Discretion and interpretation of general guidance is required making and issuing decisions in relation to housing need, ensuring that customers understand the allocations scheme's processes, receive support to actively participate in the scheme where necessary and understand the review process where they do not qualify to participate or wish to challenge their priority
- Performing re-assessments and reviews as necessary when customers' circumstances change
- Actively helping customers with urgent or emergency housing needs to access relevant housing including but not limited to adapted housing, specialist housing, supported housing and Extra Care Housing, exercising initiative and creativity in pursuing all available solutions
- Liaising with health, occupational therapy, social care, housing provider, care provider and other colleagues as necessary to achieve moves to suitable accommodation to facilitate the greatest possible independence and make the most effective use of adapted and adaptable homes in the social rented stock
- Attending professionals meetings as appropriate and taking a lead in multi-agency work for customers with complex needs and/or on the edge of services. This can include difficult conversations with customers and professionals to manage expectations of what is realistic and achievable
- Providing advice to customers to help them participate in low-cost home ownership schemes

- Continually ensuring customers understand the limits of the social rented sector to provide housing solutions and the benefits of other options
- Promoting positive outcomes for individuals that support their health, well-being and socio-economic development

Homelessness

- Sensitively interviewing households who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness and assessing them in accordance with the statutory duties laid out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. These assessments must be based on the whole household's needs and can be extremely complex, involving a multi-disciplinary approach. It will include detailed investigations leading up to making statutory legal decisions on behalf of Wiltshire Council. Advanced knowledge of homelessness law and experience of making legal decisions is required to be able to conduct these interviews
- Assessing what duties, if any, are owed to households under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) and producing your own statutory decision letters that explain clearly and in good English how those decisions have been reached.
- Carrying out an assessment of customers' needs and circumstances under s189A Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and, working alongside customers to draft a jointly owned Personalised Housing Plan which will lay out the steps both parties will undertake to secure accommodation, regularly reviewing the document to ensure it remains relevant to changing circumstances
- Discretion is required when deciding what course of action or investigation is required. You must demonstrate professional curiosity and an enquiring mind in undertaking statutory enquiries and investigations into homeless applications, including detailed casework and proactive and timely enquiries. This will require investigations of customers' individual circumstances and, in certain cases, forensic analysis of financial information and other data to ascertain the facts of each case. It will involve liaising with professionals and also third parties, who may be hostile and unhelpful, carefully weighing up the information received whilst accounting for conflicting or contrary accounts. No two cases are the same and all decisions are fact specific requiring the post holder to consider lines of enquiry that will be required in each case and show creativity in those enquiries.
- Working to prevent homelessness through the provision of tailored housing advice, liaison with statutory and third sector agencies and through signposting and referrals to appropriate agencies
- To be actively involved in the care and support of homeless households by attending meetings and liaising with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure that all parties are working together for the benefit of the client. This will involve explaining a household's circumstances, gathering information, seeking consensus from professionals on the best way forward and ensuring other services are fulfilling their own statutory duties towards applicants, whilst being aware of legislative housing framework. This can include difficult conversations with customers and professionals to manage expectations of what is both realistic and achievable
- Giving advice to tenants about their rights and responsibilities, how to enforce rights in dialogue with landlords and to fulfil their responsibilities and sustain their accommodation
- Proactively engaging tenants and landlords in constructive discussion where complaints are made to the Council made under the Protection from Eviction Act 1977
- Working in partnership with statutory, third sector and private organisations to ensure DLUHC

and internal performance indicators are achieved.

- Promoting positive outcomes for individuals that support their health, well-being and socio-economic development

Administration

- Establishing and maintaining timely, accurate and appropriate administrative and computerised records, ensuring that they are kept up to date and comply with GDPR requirements
- Compiling and maintaining accurate and appropriate records of all casework on Abritas and other IT systems and provide information and statistical data as required

General

- Supporting the duties of the team during absences and the cover and preparation of a duty rota to cover the duties of the team as required by the Team Leaders and Service Manager.
- Training other members of staff commensurate with the level of the post.
- Supporting the Team Leaders and Service Manager in fulfilling the Council's statutory duties under Part VI and VII of the Housing Act 1996.
- Promoting Wiltshire Council's safeguarding agenda.
- Undertaking regular training, e-learning and professional development in line with Council and Service needs.
- Any other duties commensurate with the grade and role.

Specific requirements for this post:

May be invited to support the annual rough sleeper hot spot count that takes place overnight.

Person Specification

Specific qualifications, knowledge, and skills required for this role:

Essential

- HNC in housing or business or working towards a professional L4 Chartered Institute of Housing qualification
- Full or part membership of either the Chartered Institute of Housing, the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, or Chartered Institute of Environmental Health is desirable
- At least three years' experience of working in a housing or similar environment

- In depth understanding of housing/environmental/health policy and legislation and strategic role of local authorities
- Knowledge of housing law, in particular Housing Act 1996 Part VI and VII and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- Detailed knowledge of social housing, private housing sector, landlord and tenant legislation.
- Fluent in both written and spoken English.

Desirable

- CIH qualification or equivalent relevant housing qualification
- Detailed knowledge of housing law, in particular Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) and Landlord & Tenant housing law
- Knowledge of Welfare Benefits, wider Wiltshire Services and their interactions

Career graded posts (where applicable)

N/A

Supporting information

Driving classification	
<p>Occasional driver A valid UK driving licence is not required. Occasionally may need to travel to different locations in order to undertake the duties of the role.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Regular Driver Must hold a valid UK driving licence and have access to either their own car or a pool car in order to undertake the duties of the role, unless other forms of transport are available and viable to perform the role, including public transport, or unless a reasonable adjustment has been agreed.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Required Driver Must hold a valid UK driving licence and will drive a vehicle supplied by the Council in order to undertake the duties of the role.</p> <p>Employees should refer to the Corporate Driving at Work policy for further information.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Driving trigger points			
<p>The trigger points set out below, regarding driving licence points and at-fault accidents, apply to all staff who drive on council business.</p>			
Trigger Points	Corrective Driver Training Course or further action	Additional corrective training if appropriate or further action	
Points on driving licence	6	9	
Trigger Points	Discussion and advice on expected driving standards	Corrective Driver Training Course or further action	Additional corrective training if appropriate or further action
At fault accidents within a two-year period (whether work or personal)	1	2	3
<p>Job applicants who drive must have 9 or less points on their driving licence, and must have less than 4 at fault accidents within a two-year period. If they meet the trigger points, they will be subject to the actions outlined in the table above.</p> <p>If holding a valid licence, occasional drivers will need to declare penalty points and no-fault accidents as requested. Depending on the role, decisions as to whether this might either affect appointment or require corrective driver training, will be made case by case.</p>			

Political restriction	
This role is politically restricted. The job holder is not permitted to undertake political activity involving standing for election as a member of parliament, as a member of the Scottish or Welsh Parliaments. The job holder is furthermore not permitted to canvas on behalf of a political party or a person who is already, or who seeks to be, a candidate. In addition, they may not speak to the public or publish any written or artistic work that could give the impression they are advocating support for a political party	<input type="checkbox"/>
This role is not politically restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Professional fees and related occupational costs	
As part of this role, or to support professional development, the job holder is required to be a member of a professional body or association. The job holder is responsible for payment of all professional fees, memberships, registrations or subscriptions and no reimbursement or contribution towards these will be provided by the council	<input type="checkbox"/>
This role does not have any professional or occupational membership requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Clearances – Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)	
This role will be engaged in ‘regulated activity’ providing specific services relating to children or vulnerable adults and is subject to a Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.	<input type="checkbox"/>
This role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and will require an Enhanced DBS check before appointment can be confirmed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
This role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and will require a Standard DBS check	<input type="checkbox"/>
The role requires a Basic DBS check to check for convictions and cautions that are considered to be unspent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.	<input type="checkbox"/>
This role is not subject to a Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service in order to undertake the duties of the role.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Clearances – Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS)	
This role requires access to the UK government Public Services Network (PSN) and is subject to a BPSS check	<input type="checkbox"/>
This role is not subject to a BPSS check	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Clearances – Non-Police Personnel Vetting (NPPV)	
<p>This role requires working in partnership with the police, and/or having access to Police related systems and is subject to a NPPV check at level 2*. (*regular access to police premises and police information, intelligence and financial or operational assets. Occasional access to those deemed 'secret').</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>This role requires working in partnership with the police, and/or having access to Police related systems and is subject to a NPPV check at level 3*(*regular unsupervised access to police premises and/or access to police information and/or information systems and/or hard copy material either on police premises or by remote access up to "secret" level. A level 3 includes a check on you, your spouse/partner, co-residents, and all family members).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>This role is not subject to a NPPV check</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Safeguarding	
<p>For all roles within Children's Services. Wiltshire Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and all staff are expected to share this commitment. You will be expected to report any concerns relating to the safeguarding of children, young people or vulnerable adults in accordance with agreed procedures. If your own conduct in relation to the safeguarding of children, young people or vulnerable adults gives cause for concern, the council's agreed child protection/vulnerable adults protection procedures will be followed.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>For all roles within Adult Social Services. Wiltshire Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults and all staff working for the council are expected to share a commitment to this. You will be expected to report any concerns relating to the possible abuse of a vulnerable adult in accordance with the agreed interagency safeguarding adults' procedures. If your own conduct in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults gives cause for concern, the council's agreed interagency safeguarding adults' procedures will be followed, alongside implementation of the council's disciplinary procedure. The job holder is accountable for their safeguarding of vulnerable adult responsibilities to their line manager.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>For all other roles within the council. Wiltshire Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and all staff are expected to share this commitment. You will be expected to report any concerns relating to the safeguarding of children, young people or vulnerable adults in accordance with agreed procedures. If your own conduct in relation to the safeguarding of children, young people or vulnerable adults gives cause for concern, the council's agreed child protection/vulnerable adults protection procedures will be followed.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>