
JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title:	Eviction Prevention & Landlord Liaison Officer
Reports to:	Service Operations Manager
Responsible for:	Tenancy Sustainment Project Worker and Support Worker*
Grade:	Coordinator
Scale:	NJC Points (new) 17-22
Department/Service:	Eviction Prevention & Landlord Liaison Service is part of Operational Services.

Job Context:

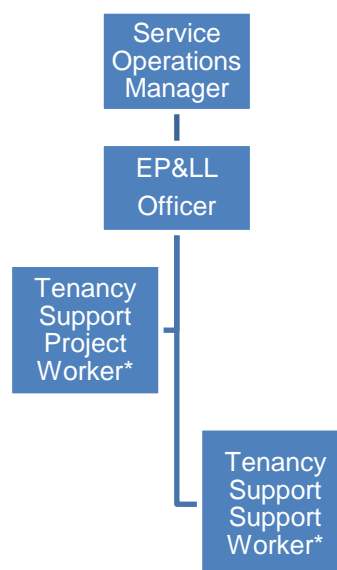
HARP is a charitable registered provider of short term social housing operating in Southend-on-Sea. We believe everyone should have a home of their own although at times individuals may require support from HARP and other agencies to avoid eviction.

A core aim is also to develop and maintain a portfolio of partnerships with private sector landlords, housing associations and local authority housing providers to find lasting homes for service users and our hostels residents.

We currently manage over 200 bed spaces in our emergency and short term hostels and employ over 80 full and part time staff and support 100 volunteers.

HARP is an active member of the “Homes for Cathy” group of housing associations, which is committed to providing services to tackle homelessness.

Organisation chart



*Subject to future funding and recruitment

Job Purpose:

The Eviction Prevention & Landlord Liaison Officer is a dual role and will be responsible for providing a highly professional customer focused service to HARP's residents who are ready to move on and also assist those who are at risk of eviction to support them to sustain their tenancies.

The Eviction Prevention & Landlord Liaison Officer will support people prior to starting a tenancy to help them understand their roles and responsibilities as a tenant, how to sustain their tenancy and facilitate their independence, quality of life, and health and wellbeing, as well as working with those at risk of eviction to reduce the likelihood of eviction.

The duties will include providing practical advice, information and support on a range of issues including, tenancy sustainment, education, employment, life skills and the promotion of personal independence. The Eviction Prevention & Landlord Liaison Officer will also work closely with our Meaningful Activity Coordinator to promote, deliver and facilitate our tenancy sustainment groups and other groups of relevant interest that promote independent living.

1. Duties and key responsibilities

Delivery

1.1 Eviction Prevention:

- To complete assessments, including risk assessments, with service users to identify any vulnerabilities, and develop appropriate action plans to promote tenancy sustainment
- To monitor the implementation and progress of tenancy sustainment action plans
- To assist new tenants to set up and maintain their tenancies, including signposting to support to furnish and equip their home
- To visit tenants in their homes to carry out tenancy sustainment work
- To provide information and referrals on a range of issues, including, but not limited to mental health and wellbeing, education and training, and employment
- To provide advice and guidance on tenancies at risk, working with tenants at risk of eviction to reduce the likelihood of eviction
- To work closely with the Homeless Prevention Team, Hostel Teams and Property Manager and appropriate external agencies to ensure a robust holistic approach to tenancy management and sustainment
- To liaise with Southend-on-Sea Borough Council's Homeless Solutions Team and Private Sector Housing Team regarding tenancies at risk, including making referrals under the 'Commitment to Refer' initiative under the Homeless Reduction Act
- To maintain accurate and detailed records of all communication with tenants, ensuring that records are updated in a timely fashion after each contact or visit.
- Ensure that the reasonable service demands of residents are provided quickly and effectively.
- To work with residents to assist them to maintain and improve the environment of their homes.
- To work in partnership with relevant external agencies and to take part in external groups relating to tenancy sustainment and homelessness prevention.

1.2 Landlord Liaison:

- To source private landlords, letting agents, housing associations and local authority housing teams willing to let properties to vulnerable people and to build professional working relationships with them

- To be the main point of contact and to develop and maintain strong pro-active relationships with private landlords, letting agencies, social housing associations and the local authority housing department
- To creatively address barriers to landlords accepting claimants, through negotiation and relationship building
- Ensuring properties offered by landlords meet health and safety standards and are habitable
- To assist beneficiaries with property viewing, signing up for tenancies and housing benefit, understanding their rights and responsibilities and arranging direct payments to landlord where appropriate
- To support the growth, expansion and delivery of the Eviction Prevention & Landlord Liaison Service
- To participate in case conferencing with internal and external colleagues to build caseload
- To attend regular meetings with accommodation providers to review progress and problems relating to tenancies

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Ensure that the information on the HARP In-Form database is accurate and fully up dated so that it is always available for monitoring and reporting purposes and in line with Data Protection requirements.
- Keep monthly records of:
 - Number of new Landlord and letting agent relationships
 - Networking for new relationships
 - Number of people referred
 - Number of evictions prevented
 - Number of new tenancies sustained which are greater than 3 months
- Take responsibility for conducting 'end of support' surveys with participants and providing positive and negative case studies.
- To develop a monitoring system to record data on properties and tenancy occupation and to use this to inform learning and evaluation

Budget

- Provide timely financial information to the Service Operations Manager to ensure that the HARP budget is effectively managed within set targets.
- Take responsibility for managing petty cash and other expenditure.

Stakeholder management

- Liaise with the HARP Homeless Prevention Team to discuss suitable referrals for eviction prevention and/or tenancy sustainment support.
- Liaise with the Meaningful Activities Co-coordinator to provide appropriate 'Renting Ready' tenancy sustainment groups relevant to the person.
- Develop and maintain good professional working relationships with all the other agencies that work in partnership with HARP, and establish where appropriate, joint service user reviews so that all support can be coordinated for the service user's benefit.
- Liaise with the HARP Homeless Prevention Team and Hostel Teams to determine the current and future need for suitable move on accommodation.
- Support the Service Operations Manager and Service Managers to maintain relationships with all relevant external stakeholders and organisations.

Local press and PR

- Support the work of the Fundraising Department and Communications Officer as required in promoting HARP's services to the local press and media agencies.
- Collaborate with the Fundraising Team and Communications Officer in insuring that social media is effectively used.
- Ensure that programme information with regards to participant outcomes is kept updated.

2. General Responsibilities

- Represent and be an ambassador for HARP.
- Attend regular team meetings, supervision sessions, and performance reviews.
- Undertake learning and development activities as appropriate to keep abreast of current legislation, regulatory requirements and best practice.
- Abide by organisational policies, codes of conduct and practices.
- Support and promote diversity and equality of opportunity in the workplace.
- Ensure that service users are safeguarded, protected from abuse and improper treatment
- Treat with confidentiality any personal, private or sensitive information about individual organisations and or clients or staff and HARP data.
- Be flexible and carry out other associated duties as may arise, develop or be assigned in line with the broad remit of the position.

PERSON SPECIFICATION: Eviction Prevention & Landlord Liaison Officer

EXPERIENCE

1. An understanding of and substantial experience of working face to face with vulnerable people.
2. Substantial experience working in the homelessness field sector, supported housing environments or in a property inspection and letting department or similar.
3. Good experience of applying Health & Safety guidance to property inspections and ensuring that policies and procedures are adhered to.
4. Experience of working with a range of stakeholders and partnership working and liaising with colleagues and other agencies e.g. housing needs teams and landlords.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

5. Clear communication skills face to face and on the phone or email.
6. Ability to manage difficult situations, and deal with them calmly, efficiently and effectively.
7. Writing skills – Able to produce reports and ability to write succinct documents on complex areas.
8. IT skills at a level that supports report writing, email, internet and database.
9. Time management and organisational skills.
10. Ability to establish trust and maintain a good rapport with residents when carrying out advice/support work; including the ability to identify and raise concerns regarding safeguarding.
11. Ability to engage and motivate others.
12. Self-motivation and the confidence to work alone but can also work co-operatively and flexibly as part of a team.
13. Ability to stay focused and efficient in the face of changing priorities.
14. Ability to remain calm in a crisis and deal with all incidents in a professional manner.

KNOWLEDGE

15. Regulatory requirements and best practice guidance relating to:
16. Homeless people and the issues that may affect them including physical ill-health, mental ill-health, drug and/or alcohol misuse
17. Databases and writing reports.
18. Current legislation and legal issues in relation to the Housing and Homelessness including Housing Act and welfare benefits
19. Supported Housing environments

EDUCATION/TRAINING

20. NVQ Level 4 or equivalent in Health and Social Care (Adults), Housing, AIG (Advice, Information and Guidance) or any other related qualification.
21. Willingness to undertake any further training that may be seen as necessary to further your knowledge and to become more effective in your role.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

22. Able to travel extensively within the Borough.
23. Able to work evenings and weekends and Bank Holidays on a shared rota.
24. Works well on own and in a team with a flexible approach to work.
25. Commitment to the values and ethos of HARP.
26. Full Driving Licence and access to a car required (*essential for this role)

HARP Safeguarding Statement and Equality statement

Safeguarding Statement

HARP is founded on the principles that people have a right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of any abuse. The safety and well-being of each service user is of paramount importance.

HARP intends to create services within which people are safe from abuse, and in which any suspicion of abuse or actual abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

Equal Opportunities Statement

HARP recognises that people with different social and ethnic backgrounds, skills and attitudes, can bring new ideas and perceptions to an organisation.

HARP is committed to taking positive action to fight unlawful discrimination in every aspect of its work and the services it provides. HARP believes that everyone has a right to services and employment which are free from direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of gender, race, colour, creed, religion, marital status, sexual orientation or disability or any other grounds protected by legislation.

Ver.1 26 March 2019