


GLPC Job Description

	Job Title	Resettlement Housing Support Officer
	Directorate	Resident and Housing Services
	Department	Housing Needs and Support
	Grade	PO1
	Reports to	Homelessness Prevention and Relief Team Leader
	Staffing Responsibility	None

Job Purpose:

The key purpose of the Resettlement Housing Support Officer role is to provide specialist early advice and continued support to Refugees and Asylum Seekers seeking housing assistance, alongside managing a caseload. The role also offers housing assistance in the community, such as in refuges and Community Hubs in Brent.

The postholder will work strategically with a range of partner organisations and will assist in leading on support and resettlement for new families arriving in the UK or where existing arrangements have broken down; particularly for families arriving under the Home Office Resettlement Schemes.

The role will seek to empower Refugees and Asylum Seekers to support them with finding a solution to their housing crises, and particularly:

- Engaging individuals in the borough whom have made an approach for homelessness assistance, or for whom we have been informed will be imminently homeless from their Home Office provided accommodation or sponsor, by conducting initial contact and a triage assessment.
- Providing support for those experiencing a housing crisis and managing their expectations in relation to the private rented property market in order to make the decision for themselves.
- Linking those individuals with, and advocating for the right assistance in existing services to address their holistic needs.
- To avoid a placement in Temporary Accommodation by receiving timely assistance in relation to their housing crisis and actively recognising their needs early on, signposting and referring to relevant support services.

Principal Accountabilities and Responsibilities:

The Resettlement Housing Support Officer will deliver intensive, specialist support to homeless clients who have recently arrived in the UK or are leaving Home Office accommodation such as Bridging Hotels. This will include:

1. Providing early advice at the point of either the application being made, or the Council being notified of an upcoming reunion.
2. Managing and maintaining a detailed spreadsheet of families from the Home Office regarding upcoming notices, and family reunions and conducting initial triage in preparation and ahead of their evictions or family reunions, as well as those from Ukraine or Afghanistan scheme.
3. Managing a caseload of people who are currently experiencing a housing crisis, and providing a service that seeks to minimise the duration of that crisis.
4. Cases will be picked up on duty one day per week, in addition to weekly case allocations.
5. Understanding the complex, multiple needs as well as strengths of those individuals; and develop trusting, non-dependent relationships to improve their confidence and motivation to progress towards their next step in housing.
6. Empowering individuals to find their own solution to their housing crisis, drawing on the assistance provided by the Housing Needs Service and utilising our affordability assessments, Ready to Rent sessions and Find A Place you can afford scheme.
7. Motivating and enabling individuals to create and progress through individual action plans to find and sustain new housing, taking account their personal circumstances.
8. Helping people to understand the rented housing market, keeping up-to-date with Local Housing Allowance, benefit changes, and opportunities.
9. Providing some support for individuals through the resettlement process when moving to a new home.
10. Ensuring that council tax, utility bills and benefits have been updated, and by conducting a 6 week post-tenancy sign up check-in call with all housed applicants within the wider cohort to ensure rent payments are in place and there are no other tenancy related issues.
11. To conduct initial triage assessments, and to interview all Refugees and Asylum Seekers who approach or are referred to the Council in housing need and assigned to you.
12. To determine what actions can be taken to resolve the issues that are threatening them with homelessness, and explore what options are available including funding, hosting and private rented accommodation, secure tenancies and out of London accommodation.
13. To provide advice at the early stage of initial triage assessment, especially including that of employment and financial advice, and referrals and signposting to any relevant agencies in the borough for necessary support.
14. To ensure Refugees and Asylum Seekers who approach the Council in housing need are supported to remain with their hosts and to resolve the threat of homelessness through mediation and negotiation.

15. To provide excellent customer service whilst being sensitive to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers and supporting those who are vulnerable.
16. To engage with other agencies such as Community Cohesion, Children Services and mental health teams, as well as access faith and ethnic communities who can support them through resettlement.
17. To help represent (alongside Resettlement Housing Officer's) the Housing Needs Service at meetings relating to Home Office resettlement schemes, Refugees and Asylum Seekers and offer expert guidance on housing options.
18. To help support the Resettlement Housing Officers in developing and maintaining a wide range of productive working relationships with all partners including local authorities, Children Services, Home Office, Refugee Council, and other specialised services.
19. To provide a clear data that reflects the demand on the Local Authority, the impact on the supply of housing and duties of the Local Authority and information sharing protocols with other boroughs and the Home Office.
20. To maintain comprehensive data and produce regular and on-demand reports and publicise the housing options that we offer by contributing to information that can be displayed on the web and leaflets.
21. To conduct visits to appropriate locations both inside and outside of the borough, as and when is necessary, to assist in the investigation of households circumstances.
22. This could be achieved through some use of public transport, however it is desirable that the postholder has access to some form of their own transport.
23. To have good understanding of the issues affecting affordability of housing including accurate understanding of benefits, welfare reforms (current and proposed), and geography.
24. To maintain a detailed knowledge of immigration law and practice, and homelessness legislation, case law and government guidance concerning the Council's statutory duties.
25. To maintain up to date knowledge of the different housing options available to customers seeking accommodation including; the private rented sector, intermediate housing schemes, and hostels.
26. To maintain accurate written and computer records, reports and other monitoring information as required, as well as keeping other records necessary to provide an adequate management information data base.
27. To conduct outreach work aimed at supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers with a housing need in the community, preventing future homelessness and promoting alternatives to social housing, as required.
28. To write and issue all statutory letters, including S184 decision letters, referral to other authorities where an applicant's local connection lies, and outcome letters which advise the applicant of the outcome of their initial interview.
29. To make all necessary referrals to relevant services or departments, including the Council's medical officer, social care services and other relevant departments.

30. To investigate high needs or exceptional cases. This may include preparing reports for the allocations and social housing panels where required.
31. To deal with enquiries, complaints and correspondence from clients and their advocates, including solicitors, councillors, MPs, the ombudsman and other housing providers, in line with the Council's complaints and enquiries procedure.
32. To undertake project work around new initiatives and priorities that the Council or Government may develop, including targeted housing support, special viewings or lettings schemes and research on housing needs.
33. To develop and maintain a positive relationship with customers, resident organisations, other housing providers, council officers, contractors, elected members and other agencies to ensure high quality service standards are maintained.
34. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all employees are required to act in such a way that at all times safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.
35. Carry out duties with due regard to the Council's Customer Care, Equal Opportunities, Information Governance, Data Protection and Health and Safety policies and procedures.
36. Undertake any other duties commensurate with the general level of responsibility of this post.
37. Employees should embed environmental sustainability into their work, actively contributing to Brent becoming a carbon-neutral borough in 2030.

DBS Status	Enhanced
Politically Restricted	No

Person Specification

<i>All criteria are essential</i>	<i>To be identified by:</i> <i>Application Form(A)</i> <i>Test/assessment (T)</i> <i>Interview (I)</i>
Qualifications and Professional Membership requirements:	

<p>Knowledge (please specify all essential criteria):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good working knowledge of all core legislation such as the Housing Act 1985, Housing Act 1996 as amended by Homelessness Act 2002, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, housing needs issues, related legislation and case law. • Knowledge and understanding of the law relating to Immigration and supporting guidance. • A good working knowledge of housing benefit rules and of the supply and demand issues related to public sector and private housing in an inner London council. • Comprehensive knowledge of prevention tools and options • Some working knowledge of the supply and demand issues related to public sector and private housing in an inner London council. 	<p>A/I</p> <p>A/I</p> <p>A/I</p> <p>A/I</p> <p>A/I</p>
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<p>Experience (please specify all essential criteria):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of giving advice and information to vulnerable customers and working in a busy front line customer focused environment. • Strong and effective experience in provision of exceptional customer services. • Worked with households experiencing a housing crisis and the provision of advice and assistance covering a range of aspects of that crisis. • Application of the Suitability Assessment in recommending potential pathways for applicants. • Experience of negotiation / advocacy / mediation 	<p>A/I</p> <p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>A</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate commitment to and comfort with the Council's equalities and diversity policy through all aspects of service delivery. 	A
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<p>Skills and abilities (please specify all essential criteria):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent inter-personal skills, with an ability to develop a rapport with and guide residents towards sustainable outcomes. Ability to organise own workload and prioritise competing demands. IT literate, including use of word processing, spreadsheets, databases and e-communication. Ability to deal with difficult customers and maintain positive working relations. Ability to achieve targets and methodically respond to changing demands and priorities. Ability to negotiate with households in housing need and influence outcomes. Ability to communicate well, in writing and in person. 	<p>A/I</p> <p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>A/I</p> <p>A/I</p> <p>A/I</p> <p>A</p>
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<p>List desirable criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to motivating and empowering people to succeed and providing excellent customer service. 	A/I
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