

Gravesham Borough Council

Division:	Housing & Operations
Department:	Private Sector Housing
Post Title:	Housing Improvement Officer
Grade:	SO1
Hours	37
Responsible to:	Private Sector Housing Manager

Job Description

To assist in the delivery of the council's private sector housing enforcement functions. To deliver housing initiatives that complement the council's private sector housing enforcement functions and provide solutions to local housing problems.

This job description is intended as a working document only, giving a guideline to the major tasks to be performed. It is anticipated that the post will develop as working practices change in order to meet the demands of the service, new legislation or policies of the council. It is expected the post holder will contribute to and assist in the development of such changes

Job summary

1. Ensure that appropriate housing advice is provided to tenants and landlords in respect of their respective rights and obligations.
2. Respond to complaints about housing conditions in the private sector.
3. Survey and assess housing conditions in the private sector and, where necessary, take enforcement action against owners, landlords, managers and other responsible persons to ensure homes are maintained in a satisfactory condition.
4. Prepare and serve statutory notices, such as Requisition for Information Notices, Hazard Awareness Notices, Improvement Notices, Prohibition Orders, Notices relating to Emergency Remedial Action, Emergency Prohibition Orders, Building Act Notices, Public Health Notices, and Abatement Notices.
5. Project manage building contracts when enforcement action has failed to secure the completion of necessary works, by preparing specifications, obtaining estimates or tenders, supervising and approving building works, making payments, and recharging costs to notice recipients.
6. Assist with the implementation, delivery and enforcement of mandatory and discretionary licensing schemes and be an authorised signatory for all forms of licensing documentation, including licences and associated notices.
7. Assist with the delivery and enforcement of council initiatives to bring empty properties back into use.
8. Investigate allegations of unlawful eviction and harassment and take appropriate enforcement action where necessary.
9. Prepare prosecution and appeal cases, and represent the council in court and at tribunals.

10. Research, propose, organise, deliver, and promote other housing initiatives as required.

Main responsibilities

To assist in the day to day running of the council's private sector housing services including the investigation of complaints, the survey of dwellings, preparation of specifications of work and enforcement proceedings.

To respond to telephone calls and correspondence within the Council's specified target timescales.

Working in partnership with internal business partners and other external agencies contribute to the achievement of Council's overall performance objectives, community development, sustainability and development.

General

To carry out such other duties as may be required of you, commensurate with the grade and level of responsibility, as directed by management.

Ensure that all council policies relating to health and safety, including those relating to lone working, are strictly adhered to at all times.

To participate as required in the Council's Emergency Planning Operations which may involve duties outside the post holder's normal job description and contracted hours. In the event that an incident has occurred which disrupts the council's ability to deliver it's critical functions, the post holder will be expected to participate in the recovery stage which may include undertaking duties within the post holder's competencies in other departments and/or at other locations.

A commitment and contribution to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is an essential requirement of the post.

The post holder will carry out all duties and activities having regard to the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and in accordance with any instructions from senior members of staff under that Act or any Council or Departmental Codes of Practice or Procedures.

The post holder must ensure that data quality and integrity is maintained and that data is processed in accordance with council policy, the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Act and other legislation

The post holder will comply with Statute and Council Policy in all respects.

An awareness and commitment to section 17 which places a statutory duty on police and local authorities to work in partnership to reduce crime and promote community safety. It is also required that community safety is to be a thread running through all functions of the LA

A commitment to excellent customer service and the values of the Council

	PERSON SPECIFICATION	
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	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
SKILLS/ABILITIES (Specific skills and abilities required to undertake the duties)	<p>Ability to solve problems.</p> <p>Ability to inspect properties and identify defects.</p> <p>Ability to apply the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.</p> <p>Ability to prepare statutory notices and licences, and prepare cases for prosecution or appeal.</p> <p>Excellent written, numerical and oral communication skills.</p> <p>Ability to deal well with difficult customers.</p> <p>Be organised and have a good attention to detail.</p> <p>Ability to confidently use Microsoft Office and other IT software systems</p>	
KNOWLEDGE (Particular knowledge which will be necessary to perform the work effectively, e.g. of specific legislation or regulations)	<p>Knowledge of legislation relating to private sector housing.</p> <p>Knowledge of building construction and contract administration.</p> <p>Knowledge of HMO licensing, selective licensing and caravan site licensing.</p> <p>Knowledge of Building Regulations and the Planning regime.</p> <p>Knowledge of the criminal justice system and civil appeal procedures.</p> <p>Awareness of landlord and tenant issues.</p>	
QUALIFICATION TRAINING (Educational/vocational qualifications and other training)	A degree or similar qualification in a relevant subject, such as environmental health or building surveying.	Any other qualifications that could be used in this area of Housing

Verification will be required	<p>Certificate of competency for the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).</p> <p>Full driving licence.</p>	
EXPERIENCE (Level and type of previous experience)	<p>Relevant experience in the field of private sector housing.</p> <p>Building surveying experience.</p> <p>Experience of working with landlords.</p> <p>Experience of preparing and serving a range of statutory notices and being an authorised signatory for the same.</p> <p>Experience of statutory licensing regimes.</p> <p>Experience of supervising building contracts.</p> <p>Experience of preparing cases for prosecution or appeal.</p> <p>Experience of dealing with difficult situations and conflict management.</p> <p>Experience of project administration and delivery.</p>	
QUALITIES (Particular qualities necessary to carry out the works, e.g. ability to work under pressure or work cooperatively in a team)	<p>Can work under pressure and to deadlines.</p> <p>Ability to act on own initiative and be proactive in improving procedures, processes and customer service</p>	
SPECIAL CONDITIONS (e.g. willingness to work unsocial hours or wear a uniform)	<p>Must have adaptable and flexible attitude to work requirements</p> <p>Commitment to equal opportunities</p> <p>Out of hours working on a rota</p> <p>Regular site visits to assess property conditions in the private sector. Inspections will include accessing</p>	

	<p>hard to reach and dirty areas, such as loft spaces, and may include climbing ladders and scaffolding. Inspections may also involve visiting dwellings which are in a filthy and verminous condition.</p>	
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