

Post Specification

Post Specification - Key Information

- **Post Title: Homelessness Service Officer**
- **Date: December 2025**
- **Post Group Number: 8914**
- **Job Family: People Care and Development**
- **Job Family Role Profile: PCD10ii**
- **Final Grade: Grade 12**

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile.

Service Area Description

The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, Housing Act 1996, and the Homelessness Act 2002, placed statutory duties on local housing authorities to ensure that advice and assistance to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness is available free of charge. The statutory duty for homelessness for Westmorland and Furness Council sits within the Thriving Communities Directorate, specifically the Housing division.

The Homelessness Service Officers are part of the homelessness team delivering the Council's statutory duties in accordance with Homeless Legislation, providing comprehensive advice and support in respect of the Council's prevention and relief duties to those experiencing homelessness.

Purpose of this Post

To work within the Homelessness Service Team to complete homelessness assessments, providing advice and assistance to applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

To take a positive and proactive approach to preventing & relieving homelessness, produce personalised housing plans and review these plans on a regular basis to optimise housing options and positive outcomes.

To issue S184 decisions on homeless applications in accordance with the Housing Act 1996, Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

To work in partnership with other agencies and services to meet the needs of homeless households to promote sustainability and reduce repeat presentations and support the complex needs such households present with.

Key Job Specific Accountabilities

- To ensure the Council meets its statutory duty towards people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness through the effective management of a case load.
- To provide a face-to-face service to those in immediate need, to establish if criteria for emergency accommodation is met and to arrange that this is made available for occupation in accordance with the Homelessness Code of Guidance.
- To ensure homelessness assessments are undertaken with clients to determine any legal duties owed in accordance with homelessness legislation, to investigate their support, medical and accommodation needs, providing advice on a range of realistic and sustainable prevention options.
- To ensure applicants are provided with comprehensive advice on the full range of housing options available to them, considering individual needs and eligibility for assistance in

accordance with homelessness legislation, including covering out-of-hours emergency homeless calls on a rota basis.

- To de-escalate and appropriately manage conflict.
- To ensure comprehensive and accurate records are kept and the web-based homelessness system is regularly updated for audit purposes to enable monitoring required by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) service planning, scheduling work across available resources, decision-making and also effective case management.
- To effectively monitor case work ensuring compliance with standards and policies and to take appropriate action to identify and implement initiatives to improve service delivery in conjunction with the Homelessness Service Team Leader and Service Manager - Homelessness.
- To undertake activities targeted at the reduction of temporary accommodation expenditure through early intervention, prevention and relief of homelessness including the effective co-ordination of activities contained within client Personalised Housing Plans. This will include persuasive negotiations with housing providers and partner organisations to enable access to housing for clients with complex needs.
- To provide mentoring and support to team members, and technical advice to other colleagues.
- To have due regard to equality and diversity, and to work in a fair and reasonable manner towards all people, ensuring service standards are maintained for all clients.
- To establish and maintain effective liaison and joint working arrangements with other statutory and third sector agencies and make appropriate referrals to accommodation and support services as necessary. This will include representing the Council at multi-agency meetings.
- To support the development of policies and operational guidance to ensure efficient performance of duties, identifying training needs within the team, ensuring the continuous professional development of staff and the development of the Homelessness Service which contribute the delivery of strategic objectives.
- To ensure safeguarding is a key consideration when assisting clients accessing the service.
- Undertake such other duties that are required from time to time and are commensurate with this position.

Please note: Annual targets will be discussed during the appraisal process.

Key Facts and Figures of the Post

- **Budget Responsibilities:**
- **Staff Management Responsibilities:**
- **Other:** Out of hours working on a rota basis

Essential Criteria

Qualifications:

- Minimum 5 GCSEs or be able to demonstrate significant equivalent relevant and demonstrable experience.
- In depth knowledge and understanding of homelessness legislation and all relevant national quality standards.
- An understanding of tenant/landlord responsibilities including illegal evictions.
- Knowledge of the Welfare Benefit System.
- Understanding of the Equality Act 2010.
- Understanding of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Understanding of the General Data Protection Regulation.

Experience and Expertise:

- Experience of working with people including vulnerable clients & those with complex needs.
- Experience and knowledge of safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- Experience of partnership working and multi-agency working.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Able to demonstrate effective problem-solving skills, work under pressure and prioritise unforeseen and urgent demands potentially involving conflict.
- Be approachable /non-judgemental and have an ability to show empathy.
- Excellent IT skills including the use of Microsoft Office.
- Be able to work outside of normal office hours, when required.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

This post requires a DBS check. The level of check required is Enhanced DBS – no barred list.

Job Working Circumstances

Emotional Demands: Post holder would have responsibility for dealing with regular and significant emotional demands as their actions may cause genuine distress to the client group and it may be in conflict with their wishes and expectations of the service.

Physical Demands:

Working Conditions:

- Post holder may experience considerable abusive and / or aggressive language and behaviour when working with the client group on a regular basis.
- Ability to manage challenging/adverse behaviour from client group on a regular basis.
- Participate in the out of hour's rota.
- Post holder is required to work from an office base and provide cover in alternative anchor buildings as required.
- Ability to Lone Work.

Other Factors:

- Requires the ability to travel around designated area to undertake duties to meet the needs of some client groups i.e. home visits/hospital assessments.
- Must have a full driving licence and access to a car, and the ability to travel throughout Westmorland and Furness.