

Post Specification

Post Specification - Key Information

- **Post Title: Housing Standards Officer**
- **Date: December 2025**
- **Post Group Number: 8946**
- **Job Family: Regulation and Technical**
- **Job Family Role Profile: RT10**
- **Final Grade: Grade 12**

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

Service Area Description

The Council has statutory duties, principally under the Housing Act 2004, for the enforcement of housing standards and licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The Council also seeks to reduce the number of long-term empty homes in the area and to improve the energy efficiency of the housing stock in the district. This is a key front-line role for the Council in complying with these duties and meeting its strategic objectives to reduce empty homes and improve energy efficiency.

Purpose of this Post

To exercise delegated legal powers under the Housing Act 2004 and the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other related statutory instruments to secure safe, healthy and well-managed housing conditions across the private rented sector.

A significant part of the role involves the licensing and regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in accordance with Parts 2 and 3 of the Housing Act 2004. This includes assessing applications, determining the fit and proper status of licence holders and managers, inspecting licensed and unlicensed HMOs and ensuring compliance with licence conditions and management regulations. The postholder will also contribute to the development and delivery of additional or selective licensing schemes where required.

The postholder will act as a competent person in determining and implementing appropriate enforcement responses, including the service of statutory notices, the imposition of financial penalties and the initiation of legal proceedings.

The role contributes to the Council's strategic objectives to safeguard tenants, support responsible landlords, bring empty homes back into use and improve energy efficiency across the housing stock. It also provides a career-grade pathway to support the recruitment, training and retention of housing enforcement professionals.

Key Job Specific Accountabilities

- Carry out property inspections and assessments using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to identify Category 1 and 2 hazards and determine the most appropriate enforcement response. Where other breaches or statutory issues are identified during inspection, the postholder will exercise or recommend the use of additional legal powers available to the Council under relevant housing, environmental or public health legislation.

- Exercise delegated powers to serve statutory notices, issue financial penalties and take formal enforcement action in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation and enforcement policies
- Prepare legally defensible enforcement documentation and evidence bundles for First-tier Tribunal and court proceedings, including conducting interviews under PACE and acting as an expert witness.
- Enforce legislation relating to the private rented sector including the forthcoming Renters' Rights Act/Awaabs Law, Housing Act 2004, Environmental Protection Act 1990, Public Health Acts, and associated statutory instruments (including Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations, Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards Regulations and Electrical Safety Standards).
- Determine and issue licences for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) under Parts 2 and 3 of the Housing Act 2004 and ensure compliance with licence conditions and management regulations.
- Investigate and take enforcement action in relation to unlawful eviction, landlord harassment, and other tenancy-related offences.
- Support the delivery of the Empty Homes Strategy by taking appropriate enforcement action to bring long-term vacant dwellings back into use.
- Provide technical and legislative advice to landlords, tenants and other stakeholders, and represent the Council in multi-agency forums and public meetings.
- Mentor and support less experienced officers, promoting continuous professional development within the Housing Standards Team.
- Contribute to policy and procedural development to ensure the service meets statutory obligations, adapts to emerging legislation, and delivers continuous improvement.
- Maintain accurate, evidence-based records in accordance with legal and procedural requirements.
- Ensure safeguarding considerations and equality of access are embedded within all aspects of service delivery.
- The postholder will exercise the investigatory and enforcement powers granted under the Renters Rights Act to support effective regulation of the private rented sector. This involves using statutory powers to enter residential and business premises, inspect, require information and obtain copies of documents or electronic records in accordance with the Act.
- The role includes securing information from landlords, letting agents and property managers where required to determine compliance and gathering evidence with accurate written records that reflect statutory procedures and the Council's enforcement approach.
- The postholder will assess the evidence obtained and determine the most appropriate enforcement response, which may include civil penalties, notices, licensing decisions or referral for legal proceedings. The role also requires close working with other services and partner agencies such as Trading Standards, Environmental Protection, Legal Services, Fire and Rescue and Housing Options where coordinated investigations are necessary.
- Investigatory activity must always be proportionate, legally compliant and consistent with statutory guidance and the Council's wider regulatory obligations. The postholder will maintain current knowledge of investigatory powers, enforcement procedures and legislative developments relating to private rented sector reform.
- Undertake such other duties that are required from time to time and are commensurate with this position.

Key Facts and Figures of the Post

- **Budget Responsibilities:** N/A
- **Staff Management Responsibilities:** None (but may supervise or mentor junior officers)
- **Other:** Regular travel throughout the Council area; occasional evening or weekend work may be required.

Essential Criteria

Qualifications:

- Degree or Diploma in Environmental Health (EHRB registered) or equivalent qualification in a related discipline such as housing, building surveying, or environmental health.
- Alternatively, demonstrable competence and experience in complex housing enforcement sufficient to undertake delegated legal duties.
- Applicants with relevant and transferable skills from related technical, enforcement, or building trade backgrounds will also be considered, where they can demonstrate equivalent knowledge and aptitude for housing standards enforcement.
- Commitment to continuous professional development and maintaining current knowledge of housing, public health, and environmental legislation

Knowledge:

- Understanding of the Housing Act 2004 and related legislation, including the Renters' Rights Act 2025, Environmental Protection Act 1990, Public Health Acts and other statutory instruments relevant to housing enforcement.
- Knowledge of HHSRS methodology and the principles of risk-based assessment in residential premises or be willing to work towards.
- Awareness of current housing policy, private rented sector reform, and the role of local authorities in protecting tenants and promoting housing standards.

Experience:

- Experience of working collaboratively with other agencies and services in tackling poor housing conditions and associated public health issues.

Expertise:

- Effective verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to deal with difficult conversations
- Presentation skills and to give clear accurate information or evidence
- Ability to work within a team and with other agencies and organisations.
- Proven ability to organise own workload and use own initiative to solve problems.
- A commitment to providing a high standard of customer care.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- This post requires does not require a DBS check.

Job Working Circumstances

Emotional Demands:

Regular exposure to challenging and sensitive situations involving vulnerable individuals, poor housing conditions and conflict or confrontation. The use of investigatory powers under the Renters

Rights Act 2025 will increase the likelihood of dealing with hostility, refusal of entry or aggressive behaviour.

Physical Demands:

The role requires the ability to perform inspections and assessments in a variety of environments, including the use of ladders, power tools and equipment for tasks such as calcium carbide testing. The post may also involve working in confined or restricted spaces, requiring physical agility, manual dexterity, and adherence to health and safety procedures.

The postholder may be required to handle evidence, move items to access documentation and manage equipment when carrying out investigatory work.

Working Conditions:

The postholder will be required to enter residential and business premises using statutory powers. This may include seizing or taking copies of documents and electronic records. There may be exposure to abusive language, aggression and occasional risks of physical confrontation, particularly when exercising statutory powers or serving enforcement notices.

Other Factors

Must have a full driving licence and access to a car, and the ability to travel throughout Westmorland and Furness.