

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL - JOB DESCRIPTION

POST: Empty Property Officer (2 year fixed Term)
TEAM: Environment Team
GRADE: 6
POST NO.: n/a
SERVICE AREA: Regulatory Services
RESPONSIBLE TO: Environment Team Leader

VARIATIONS TO STANDARD CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

1. This is a description of the job as it is constituted at the date shown below. It is the practice of this Authority to periodically examine employee's job descriptions and to update them to ensure that they relate to the job as then being performed, or to incorporate whatever changes are being proposed. This procedure is jointly conducted by each manager in consultation with those working directly to them. You will therefore be expected to participate fully in such discussions. It is the Authority's aim to reach agreement to reasonable changes, but if agreement is not possible management reserves the right to insist on changes to your job description after consultation with you.
2. Essential Car User Allowance.
3. Undertaking duties outside normal working hours including attending evening meetings for which time off in lieu will be given.
4. As a term of employment the post holder would be required to participate in any out of hours call out service that the council may implement.
5. A Disclosure and Barring check is required for this post - basic

DATE ISSUED:
Feb 2025

JOB PURPOSE:

The post holder is primarily responsible for the investigation of empty and other problematic properties; assisting with bringing empty homes back into use; identifying support and/or enforcement actions available; and taking appropriate enforcement action when necessary to bring empty properties back into use, in accordance with the Council's Empty Property Strategy.

The post holder will also be responsible for supporting the Environmental Health Team through the implementing implementation of private sector housing legislation and for improving standards in private sector housing

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

The post holder must be knowledgeable of legislation, policy, guidance, codes of practice, standards etc. relating to empty properties and other private sector housing areas of work, keeping appraised of technical/specific knowledge and developments necessary for fulfilling the duties of the post and providing specialist advice within the council as required to deliver empty property work across the district.

1. The post holder will be required to develop systems, procedures, and innovative project work in compliance with relevant legislation, codes of practice, approved guidance, best practice and corporate policies. with responsibility to ensure the delivery of the Council's Empty Property Strategy and Action Plan.
2. To utilise investigatory skills to identify empty homes and problem properties within the district and take appropriate action(s) to address the cause of matter both formally and informally in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy.
3. The post holder is to exercise judgement and make decisions within the framework of legislation and Council Policy. Matters not covered by existing policy are referred to the Environmental Health Team Leader for guidance
4. Take decisions as to what is the most appropriate support and/or enforcement action and proceed with that action including the use of informal letters, statutory notices, and recommendation to prosecution.
5. To be able to work under own initiative and provide data analysis, communications, problem solving, innovation, negotiation and case management and delivery regarding empty properties whilst meeting targets and performance standards relevant to the assigned duties to achieve high standards of service delivery
6. Record details of all visits and actions taken in accordance with service policy and procedures by manual or electronic means, to maintain all necessary statutory records.
7. Prepare a variety of correspondence including, technical reports, statements of evidence, prosecution files, Fixed Penalty Notices, Cautions and records of negotiations, PACE interviews and discussions to achieve the requirements of the role.
8. To develop strong, positive, working relationships with internal and external partners (such as Housing Services, Planning Enforcement, Building Control, Council Tax, parish Councils, Empty Homes Agency and Elected Members) in relations to empty and problem properties and to represent the Council as required at local and regional meetings and forums, and working groups as directed
9. To undertake inspections and carry out risk assessment of houses in the private rental sector using the Housing Health and Safety Risk System (or equivalent) under the Housing Act 2004, deciding the best course of action to raise standards of housing in the private sector.
10. Promote and publicise the work of the team in relation to empty and problem properties and participate in promotional and consultation events, including national campaigns such as Empty Property Week.
11. Provide a high-quality service for residents, staff, managers, and external partners with a strong customer focus.
12. To uphold and display the HDC behaviour competency framework to at least level 2.

13. To ensure compliance with all Council policies and statutory requirements and guidance in relation to Equality and Diversity, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Communication and involvement policies

14. As a term of employment the postholder may be required to undertake other such duties as may reasonably be required of you in the post and department (or section) mentioned above or in a comparable post in any of the Organisation's other sections or departments at any of the Authority's establishments.

15. Health and Safety

- To be familiar with and at all times comply with
 - the Council's general health and safety policy,
 - the Council's specific health & safety policies and procedures as detailed in the Council health and safety policy documents, and
 - local department specific health and safety procedures as amended or added to from time to time.
- To report any unsafe practice, accident, incident, dangerous occurrence or hazard found during the course of your work to your line manager for action.
- To take reasonable care for the health and safety of yourself and of other persons who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work. To maintain Personal Protective Equipment and to report any PPE that is defective.
- To co-operate with all staff and members of the authority so far as is necessary to enable all health and safety requirements to be performed or complied with.
- To ensure anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare is not intentionally or recklessly interfered with or misused.

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL – PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE:	Empty Property Officer				
TEAM:	Environment Team				
POST NO:	n/a	GRADE:	6	WEEKLY HOURS:	37
ALLOWANCE:	Essential				
CONTRACT TYPE:	2 year fixed term				

TYPE OF CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS: Minimum requirements for the successful completion of the job	ASSESSMENT A / I / T / E	DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS: Elements that contribute to improved / immediate performance in the job	ASSESSMENT A / I / T / E
QUALIFICATIONS	<p>Educated to degree level in a relevant subject.</p> <p>Certificate of competence to perform HHSRS assessments</p>	<p>A&E</p> <p>A&E</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma/Degree in Environmental Health/Environmental Science/or equivalent qualification in a Private Sector Housing related discipline. • Evidence of active participation in continuing professional development • Member of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health • Post grad qualification in Private Sector Housing or other related Housing qualifications • Project Management qualification 	<p>A&E</p> <p>A&E</p> <p>A&E</p> <p>A&E</p> <p>A&E</p>
EXPERIENCE	Previous experience of working within Housing or Environmental Health	A&I	<p>Previous experience of dealing with empty properties</p> <p>Demonstrate competency in taking formal action including prosecutions</p> <p>Demonstrate competency in HMO and caravan site licensing.</p>	<p>A&I</p> <p>A&I</p> <p>A&I</p>
KNOWLEDGE	A good understanding and knowledge of current issues in Private Sector Housing.	A&I	Demonstrate an understanding of future pressures and legislative changes in this area of work	A&I

	<p>A good understanding of the impact that empty properties can have on local communities.</p> <p>A good understanding of the legislation that may apply to the enforcement of problematic empty properties and in bringing them back into use.</p> <p>Understanding of construction practicalities with regards to housing enforcement and energy efficiency</p>	<p>A&I</p> <p>A&I</p> <p>A&I</p>	<p>Understanding of local government political and decision-making processes.</p>	<p>A&I</p>	
SKILLS	<p>Excellent communication, persuasion and negotiation skills, including written communication including letters, reports and briefings</p> <p>Good project management skills</p> <p>Able to maintain accurate records and data analysis</p> <p>Computer literate and proficient in Microsoft Office software</p> <p>Able to prioritise own work loads and work under own initiative but also be a good team player</p> <p>Able to demonstrate strong customer focus.</p> <p>Ability to take ownership of tasks, challenges, and problems to achieve an appropriate outcome</p>	<p>I</p> <p>A&I</p> <p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>A&I</p> <p>A&I</p> <p>A&I</p>	<p>Familiar with Idox/Uniform IT systems.</p>	<p>A&I</p>	
OTHER	<p>Full current valid UK driving licence and access to a motor vehicle suitable for work purposes</p> <p>Ability to work outside standard office hours as required</p>	<p>A&E</p> <p>A&I</p>	<p>Able to work remotely as part of any flexible working strategy</p>	<p>I</p>	
Assessment Legend:		A = Application	I = Interview	T = Test or Assessment	E = Evidence (e.g. certificate)
N.B. Where more than one assessment stage is indicated against a criteria that criteria must be demonstrated at both stages					