



APPLICANT INFORMATION PACK

Housing & Customer Services Officer

Enclosed:

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in applying for this position with Ark Housing.

Please use the information provided to assist you in completing your application. Should you require any further assistance please contact us directly and we will be pleased to assist you.

General Information

Ark Housing Association is a registered Housing Association with the Department for Communities (DfC) and is an independent not for profit organisation under the Industrial & Provident Society Act (NI) 1969.

Ark Housing provides social housing accommodation for rent to those in housing need. We provide accommodation throughout Northern Ireland for families, elderly people, those with disabilities, singles, and others in housing need. We also provide family homeless services providing temporary accommodation and support services for a wide range of client needs in partnership with the Housing Executive, Social Services, and other partner organisations.

Our Vision

Ark Housing's vision is:

“Making a positive difference by empowering people and communities”

Our Mission

Ark Housing's mission is:

“In partnership, provide quality homes and support services to meet housing need and contribute to the wellbeing of communities”

Our Values

Ark Housing's values are:

Progressive	Forward thinking, supporting change & transformational
Respect	Treat everyone with dignity and esteem
Integrity	Maintain the highest professional and personal standards
Diversity & Equality	Value diversity and equality in everything we do
Excellence	Strive to deliver the highest standards of quality and customer care

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Housing and Customer Services Officer
LOCATION:	Head Office, Belfast
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	Director of Housing
REPORTING TO:	Housing & Customer Services Manager
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	Housing Assistants, Scheme Wardens, Admin/Clerical staff.

JOB PURPOSE:

- To ensure delivery of high-quality customer focussed housing management services.
- To provide comprehensive housing and estate management services in accordance with the strategic objectives of Ark Housing.
- To ensure the development and delivery of services within a framework of continuous improvement.

MAIN TASKS:

As Housing & Customer Services Officer, you will be required to contribute to the effective management and delivery of a range of generic frontline housing management and customer services in accordance with the Associations policies and procedures including:

- Housing Allocations
- Income Accounting and Rent Arrears Management
- Anti-social Behaviour Case Management
- Community Liaison and Tenant Participation
- Housing Support Services
- Supervision and Training

The following activities are indicative of, but not exclusively limited to, the duties and responsibilities of the Housing & Customer Services Officer:

Housing Allocations

- Ensuring that all vacant and new build properties are allocated promptly within set timescales and in accordance with the Common Selection Scheme and the Association's published policies and procedures;

- Responding in a timely manner to all written and telephone enquiries from housing applicants and those authorised to act on behalf of housing applicants;
- Ensuring that all applications for transfer and mutual exchange are processed and managed in accordance with the Common Selection Scheme and the Association's published policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that all allocations and transfer records are maintained in accordance with written procedures and that confidentiality and General Data Protection Regulations are adhered to;

Income Accounting and Rent Arrears Management

- Effective management and monitoring of all tenant rent accounts and initiating arrears and debt recovery actions in accordance with the Association's income management policies and procedures;
- Monitoring of tenant rent accounts on a weekly basis, providing reports to the Housing & Customer Services Manager in respect to individual cases and arrears key performance indicators;
- Maintaining high quality rent account and arrears actions within the association's integrated housing system (SDM)
- Preparing debt cases for legal action including small claims court processes, repossessions cases, and attendance at court where required;
- Ensuring effective recovery action is taken on all past tenant debtors;
- Ensuring high quality information, advice and support is provided to tenants in arrears;

Anti-Social Behaviour Case Management

- Taking a proactive and leading role in the management and prevention of Anti-Social Behaviour;
- Ensuring the enforcement of tenancy agreement responsibilities and taking timely and appropriate action in relation to tenancy breaches linked to reports of Anti-social Behaviour;
- Maintaining robust case records and attending court hearings where required;
- Liaising effectively, and building good relations with, all external statutory agencies in the management of Anti-social Behaviour;

Community Liaison and Tenant Participation

- Ensuring that all agreed tenant participation and community engagement activities are delivered in accordance with the Association's Tenant Participation Strategy & Action Plan;
- Attend all resident and tenant group meetings as required and to support the Housing & Customer Services Manager in the preparation and delivery of all tenant and public consultation exercises;
- Support the development of tenant and community groups and forums, and provide assistance and support to those groups where required;

Housing Support Services

- Ensure the delivery of high-quality support services to sheltered housing clients in conjunction with sheltered scheme supervisors;
- Undertake regular supervision and performance coaching discussions with sheltered scheme supervisors
- Ensure that weekly and monthly records in respect to health and fire safety are completed and recorded by scheme supervisors
- To review support needs assessments and interventions programmes in line with best practise, supporting people requirements and the Association's policies and procedures;
- Undertake quality assurance audits in respect to maintaining high standards of support across sheltered housing services;

Supervision and Training

- Attend regular supervision and performance coaching discussions with the Housing and Communities Manager
- Participate in any internal and external personal development training/learning being provided or recommended by the Housing and Communities Manager

Other Duties

- The post holder shall be required to represent the organisation in a positive and professional manner at all times.
- The post holder will be required to liaise closely with the Property Services team in relation to maintenance or environmental issues identified at schemes/properties.

- Attendance at conference events, seminars, meetings and training sessions may be required on occasion outside of normal working hours.
- The post holder may be required on occasion to be involved in internal working groups or teams in the development of new departmental initiatives, public relations activities or in the development of organisation or service-related literature.
- The postholder may at times be required to undertake a range of cross departmental and generic activities related to their area of responsibility, and behalf of the association where required, in the event of staff absences, shortages and as directed by the Housing & Customer Services Manager.

This job description is not exhaustive and only highlights the key areas and tasks associated with this post. It cannot be prescriptive, and it is a requirement of post holder that there exists high levels of flexibility and responsiveness to the changing needs of the organisational and service demands.

The post holder shall therefore be required to respond positively to such demands and ensure that the commitment, innovation, flexibility and delivery of high-quality services remain paramount.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Because of the nature of this position, you will be frequently required to work away from your normal base to other locations including working from home. You may on occasion be required to attend work outside normal office hours.

HOURS

Hours will normally be 37 per week. The post holder may be required to work evenings, weekends and provide out of hours cover in order fulfil the requirements of this role.

HOLIDAYS

Holidays would normally be 22 days rising to 27 after 5 years' service, increasing to 32 days after 10 years' service, plus 13 customary holidays.

PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

Position: Housing and Customer Services Officer

Date: September 2020

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL CRITERIA	DESIRABLE CRITERIA
Educational Attainment (Must Demonstrate on Application)	Relevant 3rd Level education (University Degree) OR A minimum of 5 GCSE's including English and Maths and at least 5 years' experience in a frontline social housing role within the last 8 years	CIH Level 3 Housing Qualification
Relevant Experience (Must Demonstrate on Application)	Have a minimum of 2 years' experience within the last 5yrs in a frontline social housing role incorporating at least three of the following service areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocations / Voids Management • Anti-social Behaviour • Community Engagement and Tenant Participation • Rent Account Management Have a proven track record in successfully developing relationships and partnership working with other agencies to help deal with and resolve tenancy and neighbourhood issues.	Have a minimum of 3 years' experience within the last 5yrs in a frontline social housing role incorporating at least three of the following service areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocations / Voids Management • Anti-social Behaviour • Community Engagement and Tenant Participation • Rent Account Management
ICT Skills (Must Demonstrate on Application)	Must have previous experience of using an Integrated Housing Management Software Package and be competent in the use of MS Office applications.	Experience in the specific use of SDM Integrated Housing Software Package.

Transport (Must Demonstrate on Application)	Must hold a valid driving licence & have access to a car for business purposes for use in the fulfilment of the role.	
Data Protection	Is familiar with the requirements of the general data Protection Regulations and is experienced in providing a confidential service to customers and in managing their personal information in a confidential manner.	
Customer Focus	Has experience in adopting excellent customer service initiatives and is proactive in identifying solutions to customer facing problems. Applies a professional approach to ensuring good customer service.	
PERSONAL BEHAVIOURS		
Embracing Change	Contributes positively to change and recognises the positive impact of change on individuals and the team. Is flexible and positively accepts change.	
Equality	Treats all colleagues and customers fairly and equitably and demonstrates respect for diversity.	
Team Working, Communicating & Influencing	Breaks down barriers that impact effective team working. Optimises the use of the pool of knowledge and embraces a learning culture. Has effective interpersonal communication skills and experience of report writing	

GUIDANCE NOTES

Guidance Notes on completing your Application Form

It is important that you read these notes carefully before you attempt to complete the application form so please take a few minutes to read the information in this pack which will guide you throughout the process.

Job Description and Personnel Specification

The Job Description and Personnel Specification will assist you in deciding whether you meet the essential criteria for this position. Please remember that the Association reserves the right to increase the criteria used for the short listing of candidates to be selected for interview without further notification. You should use the job description and personnel specification to help you consider your relevant experience, training and skills and ensure that you highlight them when completing the experience & training section of the application.

Short Listing Candidates

Candidates will be selected solely on the information provided in this application form and you should ensure that you answer all sections fully and provide the information requested in all sections of the application form.

CV's are not acceptable, and your application will not be registered if you submit a CV.

Confidential Equality Form

You should ensure that you complete the Equality Form and return it in a separate envelope addressed to the Equality Officer and marked Private & Confidential or by email along with your completed application form to: recruitment@arkhousing.co.uk

Supporting Documents

Documentary evidence will be required if you are short listed to attend for interview. This will include photographic identification e.g. passport, driving licence or other form of acceptable ID.

Copies of your educational qualifications, professional membership and any other documents required to support your application are also required. You may bring these documents to the office with you on the day of your interview and staff will arrange to copy them for you. Please note that all documents provided must be originals.

Disclosure of Criminal Records

All applicants must complete this section fully. Where criminal convictions are disclosed, details must be provided of the offence(s) of which the applicant has been convicted and any relevant details relating to the offences.

You should note that Ark Housing are required to carry out checks on all persons being considered for employment with the Association through the Access NI scheme.

Data Protection

All information provided by applicants will be used solely for the purposes for which it is required in this recruitment exercise and will not be disclosed to others except where we are obliged to do so in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations.

Equality of Opportunity

Ark Housing is an Equal Opportunities Employer and we welcome applications from all sections of our community. Arrangements can be made for those applicants who require additional support or assistance because of a disability or other consideration which may hinder them in this application process. This may include the provision of translation service, alternative format for the documents or arrangements to facilitate a specific disability. If you require such assistance, please contact Annemarie Carleton at this office on Tel: 028 90 752310 or Email: recruitment@arkhousing.co.uk

Equality Monitoring

To comply with our obligations under Equal Opportunities and Fair Employment legislation, we are required to monitor our recruitment exercises in order to ensure that our recruitment policies and procedures are effective. All applicants are required to complete the Equal Opportunities Form associated with this application and to return it to the Monitoring Officer.

General Points

- The application form, if completed by hand, should be completed in BLACK INK and must be legible. The application may also be completed electronically and emailed to recruitment@arkhousing.co.uk
- When completed you should read through your application again to check that you have fully completed all sections.
- If submitted by post, please make sure that you leave plenty of time for your application to be received by the closing date & time. Please remember that late applications WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED
- Pay attention to the Applicant Declaration and ensure that you have signed and dated the application form.
- Do not send any supporting documentation with this application form. We may ask for such documents if your application is successful and you are short listed for interview.
- Please ensure that you have the permission of your nominated referees to act on your behalf and that they agree to provide you with a reference.
- Canvassing on behalf of your application will disqualify your application.