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| **JOB DESCRIPTION** | **HOUSING OFFICER**  |

**1. Post Details**

 Post Title: Housing Officer

Location: Various locations across Essex Services

Line Manager: Head of Operations

Direct Reports: None

**2. Job summary**

Therapeutic optimism is at the heart of our work. Bridge Support (Bridge) believes that all clients with mental health problems can achieve and make positive changes to their lives as they move along their pathway, and it is the responsibility of all staff at Bridge to support them in their journey.

2.1 To manage all housing related issues on behalf of Bridge being the point of contact for all face-to-face interactions with tenants, landlords and local authorities by carrying out regular property visits and ensuring all parties are keeping to their terms of their contractual agreements.

2.2 To carry out all viewings and sign up new tenants and ensure they are aware of the terms & conditions of the tenancy and assisting with housing benefit applications, show tenants how to use the equipment within the property:-

* Carry out checks of properties and compile specification of works required in order to re let, ensuring the property meets the contractual & legal standards prior to re letting
* To liaise with the Finance team to ensure that rental income is maximised, sign posting tenants to welfare and benefits services and or issuing warning or notices regarding non payment
* Identify repairs required to the property to ensure the property meets contractual standards and make decisions on responsibility to repair
* To manage tenancy breaches (eg noise nuisance) and anti-social behaviour to include gathering and analysing evidence, reporting, preparation and service of appropriate statutory notices and attending court to present evidence and attending evictions when necessary
* To identify clients that require additional support and signpost/arrange support as appropriate. Liaising with support providers and other statutory agencies to assist clients in maintaining their tenancies.
* Collection of data from property visits and updating IT systems to ensure they are accurate and up to date

This role will continue to evolve with the growth of Bridge Support and from time to time the job description will be reviewed and amended, to reflect changes in demand.

**3. Main Relationships**

* 1. Reporting into the Head of Operations
	2. Working closely with the Health & Safety and Facilities Manager.
	3. Develop and sustain positive working relationships with tenants, staff, carers and external partners
	4. Develop community links and to liaise regularly with a range of agencies and individuals
1. **Main Duties Include**
	1. To instigate and implement Arrears Procedures to ensure the payment of arrears and prepare & monitor payment plans where necessary.
	2. Assist with breaches of occupancy agreements in consultation with support service teams and relevant agencies. Including preparation of notices.
	3. Update and maintain all tenants’ records and files (Housing support only) including completing profile info re each tenant.
	4. Use IT systems to log daily notes and all contact with tenants and agencies or services relating to a tenant
	5. Ensuring all tenant sign-ups are done to the relevant housing standard and all documents are correctly gathered and recorded
	6. Managing cases and ensuring all complaints or tenant issues are responded to with plans of actions in place.
	7. Assist Tenants to understand their tenancy and housing management policies and keep them informed and involved in decisions relating to their accommodation.
	8. Support individuals to understand their responsibilities and rights as a tenant.
	9. Maximise rent collection from tenants and former tenants ensuring rent is paid on time and tenancies are sustained.
	10. Responsible for refurbishment of voids and to follow Bridge supports’ housing management process. Ensuring our properties are ‘void ready’ to a high standard within an agreed timescale.
	11. To support people to move in and ensure they are safe and settled in their home and community.
	12. Ensure all complaints are recorded, reported and addressed accordingly.
	13. Assist and give advice with budgeting and benefits to ensure prompt payment or rent and household related bills to minimise the risk of arrears.
	14. Maintain close relationships with Housing Benefit teams in each Local Authority, supplying and verifying information, to assist in the smooth processing of claims to ensure delays do not arise in payments.
	15. To advise tenants on their rights to welfare benefits and housing advice, signposting them to relevant agencies – being aware of any national changes in the benefits system
	16. Assist tenants with the completion of housing benefit forms as necessary.
	17. Assist with the completion and compliance of KPI’s for Housing, management agreements, and any other monitoring information as required.
	18. Collate information on voids and maintain voids monitoring system.
	19. Assist with property audits if and when required.
	20. Monitor the completion of Health and Safety checklists, gas safety checks, PAT Testing & Fire equipment servicing in conjunction with the Health & Safety and Facilities Manager.
	21. Ensure that all repairs under the responsibility of the local councils are reported and completed to the tenant’s satisfaction, ensure that any outstanding works are regularly chased.
	22. Arrange for any redecoration and/or maintenance works to be carried out with both the Health & Safety & Facilities Manager and outside contractors. Checking for quality and standards of work.
	23. Spot check maintenance works in both void and tenanted properties.
	24. Ensure flats are furnished correctly in accordance to tenancy schedule
	25. Respond quickly to any complaints and ensure any concerns or incidents are reported and managed professionally.
	26. Carry out key audits in service offices ensuring master key system is monitored and records kept up to date. Investigate any loss of keys from service offices.
	27. Periodic inspections of properties to ensure the condition of the property meets the relevant quality standards
	28. Support the Health & Safey and Facilities in ensuring the property is fully compliant with health and safety and other inspection records.

**5. General Terms of Reference**

5.1 Seek to improve his/her own performance, contribution, knowledge and skills, and participate in training and developmental activities as required.

5.2 Ensure the implementation of Bridge’s Diversity and Equality policy statement.

5.3 Comply with Health and Safety policies and procedures.

5.4 Ensure the implementation of Bridge’s policies and procedures.

5.5 Carry out other relevant duties, commensurate with the nature and grade of the post, as required.

5.6 Ensure all work carried out is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations and comply with Bridge’s General Data Protection policies and procedures.

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| Bridge Support | PERSON SPECIFICATION**HOUSING OFFICER** |
| CRITERIA | ESSENTIAL | DESIRABLE Includes |
| **Qualifications/****Experience includes** | * Experience of the Social Housing Sector and delivery of core housing services and support
* Good maths and written English
* Good communication skills and an ability to present a range of reports and present them
 | * Chartered Institute of Housing National Practitioner to level 3 **or willingness to attain.**
* Experience of working with vulnerable people with support / care needs
* Project management experience
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| **Knowledge includes** | * Knowledge and practice in housing and tenancy management/support
* Knowledge of housing benefits and welfare reform in a supported housing environment
* An understanding of housing law and its application within social housing
* Ability to deal with complex cases and make informed decisions when assisting and supporting tenants
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| **Skills/ Abilities includes** | * Computer literate with the ability to learn IT systems efficiently
* Knowledge of Microsoft office packages, particularly Word and Excel and Housing Management software programmes
* Good interpersonal and communication skills
* Ability to prioritise and manage own workload, time and travel
* An ability to demonstrate the core values of the charity
* An understanding of repairs management including an understanding of health and safety, fire safety and other property standard legislation
* Good interpersonal skills
* Good communication skills (written and verbal) with the ability to be able to utilise a variety of skills and approaches to liaise with different partners, stakeholders as well as the ability to communicate with vulnerable adults with mental health or learning difficulties.
* Excellent organisational skills
* Good problem-solving skills eagerness to learn and adapt to any environment
* Willingness to cover other colleagues and travel to different patches as and when needed
* Ability to work in a team environment and act as a role model to others in the team, sharing knowledge and experience when necessary
* Taking ownership of personal development
* Ability to take responsibility and deliver results.
* Car owner prepared to use car for work purposes. Car is legally roadworthy, suitably serviced and includes business insurance.
* Flexible, approachable, positive and enthusiastic can-do attitude.
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| **Equal Opportunities** | * Awareness of equal opportunities best practice and implications in supporting service delivery
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| **Other** | * Able to self-manage and prioritise
* Willing to be flexible and respond to priorities as required
* Willing to undertake training, as required.
* Awareness of Health & Safety practice
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