

Housing Options Officer

Permanent Contract

Location:	Multiple locations
Responsible to:	Housing Options Site Lead
Responsible for:	N/A
Grade:	D
Hours:	35 hours per week Monday to Friday,
Annual leave:	33 days per annum (inclusive of public holidays)
Other Benefits:	Pension scheme, interest free season ticket loan and a free confidential telephone counselling service

Job Context:

YMCA London City and North (YLCAN) is an independent charity that is affiliated to the YMCA movement. We work across some of London's most deprived boroughs in Islington, Haringay, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Barnet and Hackney as well as the City of London. Over 600,000 young people call our area of London home.

Young people are at the centre of all we do. Our vision is for a society where they are equipped to create a future of their choosing. We collaborate with them so that they make informed choices through access to accommodation, youth services and community engagement.

Over 150 years we have helped tens of thousands of young people. Today, at any one time we accommodate over 400 young people who are experiencing homelessness and we positively impact the lives of thousands.

Our core values include mutual respect for individuals with different cultures, beliefs, and perspectives; encompassing diversity and inclusion; equality of opportunities and accessibility.

Our services for young people and communities in London also include Youth Hubs, Community Outreach and Childcare. Our Crouch End and London Marathon Fitness Centres provide a strongly community orientated, inclusive gym environment, where people support each other to achieve their fitness goals. Our Haringay Club provides a gymnastics and dance facility for children and the Tarling Road Community Hub is an estate based resource for all members of the community.

The housing project currently provides short term temporary accommodation for single homeless vulnerable young people aged 18 to 35 from a variety of backgrounds including: offending, mental health, domestic violence and alcohol & drug abuse. The accommodation project is open 24/7 – 365 days a year.

Job Purpose: The aim of this post is to provide a direct housing and support needs service to vulnerable young people aged 16–35. This post will assist young people to move on to independent living by providing quality information, advice and guidance service, providing benefit support to prevent rent arrears or build up



arrears, budgeting and life skills support, thus embedding a psychological informed environment. This post requires close working with a range of agencies such as Floating Support, Housing Services, Housing Benefits and Children Services.

Duties and Responsibilities

Housing Needs

- To ensure interviews, assessment and move-in with potential residents are carried out within the prescribed time limits and that the resident once accepted, is fully and carefully inducted into YLCAN.
- To conduct needs and risk assessments of residents, develop outcome-focused support plans with residents and complete all relevant move-in tasks as assigned by management.
- Provide liaison and advocacy support for assigned key residents, ensure support plans and RAs are kept up to date.
- Co-operate with external agencies and stakeholders to ensure that the wider, holistic needs of residents are met.
- Ensure all incidents and complaints are reported and dealt with in line with organisations processes.
- To be the main source of benefit information, advice and guidance to residents.
- To conduct regular meetings using the Outcome Star with assigned caseload of young people to address: rent, license agreement, IA & G, resident involvement, life skills and move-on options.
- To make referrals to relevant agencies to ensure young people's housing and support needs are addressed including access to Floating Support or Chaplain.
- To be accountable and ensure all complaints, incidents of anti-social behaviour and harassment are fully investigated and dealt with and take appropriate enforcement action to ensure effective resolution including legal remedies where necessary.
- Where required, to carry out pre-void inspections, arrange re-letting works, obtain nominations, assess applications and complete new licence agreements
- Working closely and cooperatively with the maintenance team, ensure that repairs are reported in a timely manner
- To actively source and manage move-on opportunities for residents with housing providers and complete move-on referrals accordingly.
- Take lead to correctly and promptly administer all relevant documentation for the effective and efficient functioning of the housing team.
- Support the team in implementing the 'For Youth' accreditation and embedding a psychological informed environment.

Support Needs

- Provide a welcoming environment, providing support in settling new residents into the accommodation, support in maintaining the licence, developing domestic/life skills, developing social skills/behaviour management, advice, advocacy and liaison.
- Support in managing finances, budgeting and benefit claims, emotional support and general counselling, support in gaining access to other services, support in establishing social contacts and participation in activities in conjunction with the ETE Worker and Activities Strategy.

- Update relevant notes and risk assessments, support plans and day-to-day actions with the prescribed database and keep all client information up to date. Set up and maintain relevant, key residents' files as directed as per policy and guidelines.
- To work with the Rent team to manage, feedback and report on all aspects of housing management arrears and income for your allocated residents. To engage with the Income team to deliver an effective service. Collect cash in accordance with cash handling procedures.
- To manage all aspects of anti-social behaviour for your allocated residents, this can include attending ASB panels and producing and delivering warning letters.

Health and Safety: Safeguarding

- Provide support in establishing personal safety and monitoring of health and well-being for residents. Provide support in maintaining the safety and security of the project, advice and support in relation to repairs and improvements to the project.
- Ensure that residents are aware of health and safety, security, policies and procedures. Deal with health, safety and security issues raised by staff members or residents, adhere to and support residents in understanding the procedures for reporting abuse or neglect. Report concerns of abuse and neglect issues to management.
- Ensure that residents are aware of the organisation's Complaints Procedures and deal with complaints from residents in line with company policies and procedures.
- Update relevant client key working notes, risk assessments, support plans with day-to-day actions in the prescribed database and to keep all client information up to date. To set up and maintain relevant key client files as directed by management.

General

Act as a shift lead on a rota basis to monitor/allocate daily tasks, the movements of the residents, taking responsibility for the evacuation of the building in the event of a fire alarm being raised, reporting accidents and incidents appropriately and ensuring a thorough handover to the next shift lead, carry out any other duties which may be reasonably requested by the Site Lead or a designated representative, always adhere to all Policies and Procedures.

External Agencies

- To build and maintain good working relationships with external agencies to benefit the support needs of the residents (including referral, workshops, move-on, education, training and employment opportunities).

Licence Agreement

- Carry out effective induction programme for new residents ensuring accurate assessment and identified areas for ongoing license sustainment in line with the Housing Needs Site Lead.
- To help residents maintain their license agreements by providing licence agreement sustainment guidance including budgeting skills, arrears, housing benefit, income support/job seekers allowance and anti-social behaviour.



- To manage relations and negotiations with residents ensuring that issues are addressed promptly, fairly and constructively, and ensure they comply with their licence agreements.

Income Maximisation

- To work proactively with the residents to minimise rent arrears.
- To actively manage rental income and manage any arrears for an assigned caseload of residents within the target set by the Housing Manager.
- To reach agreements to reduce arrears with residents and initiate remedial action accordingly, in line with YMCA London City and North policies and procedures.
- Inform the RSC of any circumstances that may impact upon successful rent collection

Regulatory Standards and Compliance

- Ensure all residents have the opportunity to shape and influence service delivery in relation to housing management in accordance with Tenant Services Authority guidelines.
- To carry out risk assessments and health and safety inspections, taking appropriate action to comply with legal and local authority regulations and standards.

GDPR and Data Protection

- Maintain the integrity of the personal data; protect personal data from breaches and maintain the confidentiality of personal data.
- Report any data breaches promptly to your line manager.

Foyer Reception Operations

- To manage the front reception when required to do so.
- To ensure the common areas are tidy at all times.
- To manage bookings for meeting rooms.
- To manage any admin duties including reporting of any maintenance concerns and gym memberships.

Other

- Follow the robust monitoring procedures as guided by the Housing Co-ordinator.
- To represent the organisations at various relevant external forums and meetings.
- Maintain a thorough knowledge, and work within all YMCA London City and North's Policies and Procedures (i.e. Code of Conduct, Child Protection and Safeguarding and Health & Safety policies & procedures, and appropriate government policies.
- Maintain a thorough knowledge of current housing legislation and welfare benefits.
- Undertake other duties commensurate with grade and status.
- Attend regular supervision and other personal development activities (training events and occasional overnight).
- To provide cover at any YMCA London City and North site for holiday or sickness within the housing department.

Competency: To perform the job successfully, an individual should demonstrate the following competencies:

- Dependability - Follows instructions, responds to management direction, takes responsibility for own actions, keeps commitments, commits to long and/or non-



traditional hours of work when necessary to reach goals, completes tasks on time or notifies appropriate person with an alternate plan.

- Judgment - Displays willingness to make decisions, responds compassionately to residents while maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries, exhibits sound and accurate judgment, supports and explains reasoning for decisions, includes appropriate people in decision-making process.
- Planning/Organizing - Prioritizes and plans work activities, uses time efficiently, plans for additional resource needs, sets goals and objectives, develops realistic action plans.
- Innovation - Displays original thinking and creativity, meets challenges with resourcefulness, generates suggestions for improving work, and develops innovative approaches and ideas.
- Tenacity and thoroughness, with the ability to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of situations.
- Deadline and solutions oriented with the ability to handle multiple competing priorities and wide variety of responsibilities.
- Team player who can roll up their sleeves and get involved in everything from big projects to mundane, simple tasks.
- Not easily frazzled and strong time management skills during busy and slower periods throughout the day.

Scope and limits of authority

- Administration information systems (manual and computerised) and in particular Amis and referrals, current and ex-resident files.
- The processing of all monies received at reception.



Housing Options Officers – Person Specification

Knowledge and Qualifications	
Has a NVQ Level II or equivalent in Housing, Information, Advice & Guidance or Youth work or equivalent.	Essential
Knowledge, understanding and awareness of issues faced by young people	Essential
Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety provisions and requirements in a residential project • Current housing legislation –welfare benefits 	Desirable
Knowledge and an understanding of the psychological informed environment approach.	Essential
Knowledge of customer services standards and procedures	Desirable
Has an understanding of adolescent development	Desirable
Experience	
At least one year’s experience of working in the housing sector	Desirable
Minimum of one year’s experience of working with young people	Essential
Experience of working in a psychological informed environment.	Desirable
Experience of working in a client facing role	Essential
Money handling experience	Desirable
Abilities and Skills	
Ability to form supportive relationships with service users always maintaining professional boundaries	Essential
Willingness to work flexibly in response to changing organisational requirements	Essential
Excellent communication skills (verbal and written)	Essential
Ability to work constructively as a member of a team and within a multi-agency framework	Essential
Excellent customer care skills and telephone manner	Essential
Intermediate IT skills	Essential
An organised approach to work and good administrative skills	Essential
Enthusiasm and ability to work using own initiative	Essential
Skilled in dealing with people with complex needs	Desirable
Ability to dealing with challenging behaviour in a calm and constructive manner	Desirable