

JOB DESCRIPTION – Young People’s Project worker

Reporting to: Young People’s Programme Manager **Salary** £26,765

Location Merton, London **Hours** Full time, 37.5hrs, Monday - Sunday

ABOUT US

We are SPEAR, a charity dedicated to helping homeless people across five South West London boroughs to find secure accommodation and work towards a positive future. For almost 35 years, we’ve worked tirelessly to support homeless people to recover from their personal issues and break down the barriers that they face. We recognise that homelessness is much more than just a housing issue, so we provide a range of accommodation and support services to help people reach their full potential.

PURPOSE OF JOB

Responsible for delivering SPEAR’s accommodation-based services to previously homeless young people.

DUTIES

Service Delivery

- Provide an intensive and effective needs-led service for service users in supported accommodation.
- Carry out regular key working sessions with service users to identify barriers to independence and react to issues that arise.
- Assist allocated clients to identify and work towards individual goals consistent with sustaining a tenancy.
- To be the first point of reference for allocated service users and ensure that mechanisms are in place to respond to emergencies.
- Consult service users when making key decisions that affect their service.
- To ensure that SPEAR’s Equality and Diversity Policy is promoted and implemented in all areas of the Project Workers’ responsibility.

Resource Management

- Assist clients with finances, including welfare and housing benefits and grant claims, liaising with appropriate agencies and the SPEAR Finance Co-ordinator where necessary.
- Maintain a working knowledge of available resources for clients, signposting and referring as necessary
- Maximise the opportunities available for clients through joint-working with external providers.

Casework Management

- Participate in reviews of clients’ cases – alongside partner agencies and other SPEAR services.
- Organise meetings with individual residents to assist their assessment of housing, employment, training, education and financial needs, and to draw up programmes, which outline strategy to meet these needs.
- Advise and assist residents to secure suitable move-on accommodation, contacting other agencies for suitable vacancies and making referrals to other projects as appropriate.
- Advise and give practical assistance to residents in life skills training, including benefit claims, budgeting and cooking.

- Ensure that residents obtain their entitlement to benefits wherever possible, advocating on their behalf.
- Deal with breaches of residents' licence agreements, issuing warning letters and notices to quit as appropriate, and where necessary terminating licence agreements.
- Provide telephone advice on accommodation and other matters, within reason, to callers to the project.
- Provide support for residents as appropriate, making referrals to more specialised services as necessary.
- Provide advice and practical assistance to former residents, and carry out planned resettlement work with those who secure independent accommodation.
- Maintain accurate records of work undertaken and contribute to the collation of service statistics.
- Develop innovative solutions to identified needs and identifying and accessing new services for the benefit of the service users.

Organisational Responsibilities

- Liaise and work with all internal stakeholders to deliver an effective SPEAR wide service.
- Contribute to new initiatives for the service and the whole of SPEAR.
- To participate in the planning and decision making of the organisation including project development and to remain professionally up to date and raise new issues with the Manager.
- To be responsible and accountable for providing jointly agreed advice, support, motivation, meaningful activity, crisis intervention and future planning interventions for the service users that increases their independence.
- Participate in staff management and support systems in line with SPEAR's policies and procedures, including induction, supervision and appraisals.
- Contribute to regular team meetings.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate physical environment for staff and service users.
- Keep up to date with all relevant training, policies and procedures.

Admissions

- Liaise with referral agencies, receive enquiries and interview prospective residents, consulting with the manager to determine whether to offer accommodation.
- Issue licence agreements, and other relevant documents, in the name of the SPEAR and induct new residents into the project.

Administration

- Collect Personal Charges and maintain effective arrears control.
- Be responsible for the project's petty cash and rent floats, whilst on duty, ensuring that all transactions are correctly recorded and that expenditure is properly authorised.
- Maintain records of referrals to the project and case records on individual residents.

Maintenance

- Monitor the residents around general cleaning and upkeep of the house.
- Conduct regular fire drills and room checks, and report maintenance needs and health and safety hazards as appropriate.
- To take charge of the hostel whilst on duty, when being the sole member of staff on the premises.

Liaison and Planning

- Participate in staff meetings.
- Maintain liaison with relevant agencies, groups and individuals in the community, including the DWP, other housing projects, local doctors, social workers and probation officers.
- Conduct regular house meetings with hostel residents.
- Participate in campaign and development work as appropriate.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & RESPONSIBILITIES

- An understanding of the pathways out of homelessness

- A knowledge of local services available for homeless and vulnerable people
- Basic knowledge of health and safety requirements in the work place
- Solid IT skills
- An understanding of equal opportunities and how it can be applied within SPEAR
- Represent SPEAR appropriately at all times, and work professionally with external agencies
- Able to write reports and letters effectively
- An understanding of confidentiality needs within the organisation and an ability to apply them
- A knowledge of the issues affecting young people
- Experience of inspiring previously-homeless young people or similar vulnerable client groups to achieve their potential
- Experience of assessing and then accessing suitable services for previously-homeless young people or similar vulnerable client groups
- A belief that homeless people can access permanent accommodation and become fully integrated into society on their own terms
- An ability to react empathetically to clients in crisis.
- The ability to work anti-social and flexible hours
- Experience of working to targets and criteria set by funders
- The ability to critically evaluate and reflect on performances.

VALUES

Working together

We work alongside service users, partners, staff and volunteers to provide services that meet the needs of the people we help. Together we overcome challenges.

Aspirational

We aim high, aspiring to achieve the very best outcomes for our clients. We see potential in everyone and encourage our staff and clients to achieve their own goals, dreams and ambitions. We aspire to the highest standards of professionalism.

Respectful

We respect everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances. We view everyone as an individual with their own personal journey. We always listen to and value people's views.

Determined

We work tirelessly to support people experiencing homelessness to recover from their personal issues. We break down the barriers people experiencing homelessness face.

Visionary

We try new and innovative ways to provide long-term solutions and reduce the isolation of homelessness. We are always willing to take a new approach, learning from what works (and what doesn't) and use this to guide our work.

At SPEAR, we welcome and encourage applications from everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. We are facing diverse problems, so need diverse people to tackle them.