

JOB DESCRIPTION – Housing First Worker

Reporting to Tenancy sustainment team leader

Salary £29,976.80

Location Richmond Upon Thames

Hours Full time, 37.5hrs, Monday - Friday

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

In this crucial role, your focus will be on the service delivery of SPEAR's Housing First model. You will work with staff and management teams to deliver this innovative model of housing society's most vulnerable people, you will help us drive forward a collective vision of inclusion and participation across the organisation. Housing First is a SPEAR service that provides independent tenancies with registered social landlords via the council nomination process and intensive personalised support to rough sleepers who have not progressed through any supported accommodation pathway.

DUTIES

Service Delivery:

- To contact, build and maintain pro-active working relationships with clients on the case load.
- To be responsible for the day to day delivery of the project in accordance with agreed service delivery objectives, policies and procedures.
- To offer a personalised service to each client and liaise with other agencies or specialist workers where appropriate.
- To work collaboratively with the outreach and tenancy support teams and external agencies.
- To advocate, where appropriate, on behalf of clients with external agencies regarding their welfare rights, primary health care needs and other issues affecting their health and well-being.
- To take a pro-active role in promoting awareness of the service and related issues.
- To maintain a caseload of clients and offer clients assertive, consistent, ongoing guidance & support tailored to their individual needs.
- To ensure that regular case reviews are carried out within agreed timescales and that support plans are implemented and consistently high-quality case notes are recorded on INFORM/CHAIN and other data base systems as required.

- To carry out the required level of monitoring and tracking of clients, making sure appropriate monitoring information is available to the relevant agencies.
- To ensure accurate and up to date files on all clients worked with are recorded on as required.

Referral & Assessment:

- Arranging and carrying out assessment interviews with clients and other relevant parties.
- Researching and collating additional sources of information to enable appropriate assessment decisions to be made.
- Carry out initial risk assessments in relation to all clients interviewed, and carrying out regular reviews in line with SPEAR's policies.
- Liaising as necessary with Local Authority and Housing Association personnel.
- Supporting clients to be prepared to take on the responsibility of their new tenancy.

Tenancy support:

- Negotiating support plans with each client; motivating clients to identify and work towards individual goals consistent with sustaining their tenancy and using the outcome STAR to monitor goal achievement.
- Engage clients in the process of resettlement planning, where appropriate, and reviewing regularly to take account of any changes.
- Hold regular meetings with clients primarily in their homes (where appropriate and within COVID19 restrictions), and also in the community; discussing their needs and working with them to identify options.
- Monitoring clients' physical/mental health and liaising with specialist services as appropriate.
- Address issues of social isolation and exclusion; facilitating clients' involvement in the community.
- Advising clients on benefit entitlements and ensuring that their income from benefits is maximised.
- Assisting clients in acquiring the necessary skills to effectively hold down a tenancy and to provide advice on training, employment and related issues.
- Encouraging clients to represent themselves, advocating where appropriate.
- Assisting clients in accessing specialist help; coordinating the involvement of external support agencies as appropriate.
- Accompany clients to interviews and viewings with housing providers where necessary.
- Provide clients with practical support to make their homes habitable, e.g. accessing furniture projects, setting up utilities, reporting minor repairs and maintenance.
- Ensure that the client understands and complies with the terms of their tenancy. Provide appropriate support where they do not (e.g. neighbour disputes).
- Monitor payment of rent and service charges, to prevent rent arrears and debts.
- Carry out inspections of properties to ensure that they are safe and well-maintained. Liaising with the landlord over any repairs/replacements needed.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Experience of working with people that are homeless and/or rough sleeping – working on shifts with outreach teams. Must have a good understanding of the risk management and planning needed when working in an outreach environment.
- Solid IT skills with the ability to record sound and accurate records in a timely fashion on IT applications such as CHAIN and Inform.
- Have a creative, solution-focused approach to overcoming challenges.
- Knowledge of GDPR and data management.
- Experience of multi-agency work, assessment of needs, and delivery of evidence-based interventions to support and empower people who are experiencing problems with substance misuse, poor sexual health, unhealthy relationships and hidden harm including unresolved trauma.
- Knowledge of current drug and alcohol provision and relevant services, pathways and conditions.
- Experience of assertive engagement with entrenched complex needs, able to work alongside outreach teams to build positive relationships with clients.
- Emotional resilience to deal with challenging behaviour and to facilitate ongoing constructive engagement.
- A commitment to learning and continuous improvement
- Experience of support planning and risk assessing clients with complex needs, including safeguarding knowledge
- Develop positive and professional working relationships with clients, in order to facilitate the best possible outcomes, and to address issues of social isolation and exclusion.
- Experience of conducting client assessments and interviews and outcome monitoring.

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.