

# **Staff Recruitment Pack**

## **Housing Officer**

October 2024

**Thank you for your interest in working with Lancashire Mind**

## Who are we?

Lancashire Mind is an independent mental health charity, delivering our impactful strategy that has been co-created with the people of Lancashire. We reach over 10,000 people each year.

We're an active member of the national Mind Federation, linking us with over 100 other local Mind organisations across England and Wales, providing excellent opportunities for good practice sharing and partnership working.

Our purpose is to support people in Lancashire to achieve the best mental health and wellbeing possible. To achieve this, we:

**Connect Minds** through ongoing engagement and **Change Minds** by challenging stigma and increasing knowledge around mental health. **Support Minds** by being a source of help, where, when, and how people need it.

We value being:

### Real

Grounded in lived experience and making sure our work is relevant to Lancashire.

### Bold

We're not afraid to demand better for people who need our help.

### Caring

Treating people with compassion and respect and being there for people and communities in Lancashire.

### Open

Working inclusively to tackle issues and being open to new ideas.

We believe that everyone can achieve good mental health and wellbeing and that resilience is the key to sustaining it. With 50% of mental

health conditions developing before the age of 14, building resilience from an early age is central to the work we do.

We empower people in Lancashire to value and take care of their mental health. Our work ranges from 1:1 support for people facing multiple and complex barriers, to preventative and influencing work. We work in partnership with others to make mental wellbeing a priority.

We are determined to be an organisation that is representative of the diversity of the whole county and one that challenges the mental health inequalities faced by our communities. We're working to become a truly anti-racist organisation.

Everyone who works for Lancashire Mind is fuelled by a passionate belief that enabling people to achieve mental wellbeing will reduce the number of people who go on to develop a mental health condition, and for those who do, to have a better chance of remaining well.

**Join us to connect, change and support minds.**

## Why work with us?

At Lancashire Mind our work is positive and rewarding, with a passion for improving mental health and wellbeing shared across the organisation.



As well as striving to meet the mental health needs of our local communities, we aim to be a good employer and do what we can to provide a supportive and healthy environment for our employees.

You can expect a friendly welcome from colleagues across all our teams and clear expectations about your role and how it contributes to achieving Lancashire Mind's goals.

### **Flexible working**

We operate a hybrid working policy. For office-based roles, you can split your time between home and our office in Chorley. For service delivery roles, you'll also spend time working in communities at a range of different venues.

Depending on the requirements of the role, we will also consider remote working.

Our full-time hours are 35 hours per week. We are open to requests for flexible working hours, including compressed hours. Everyone is provided with the equipment needed to work from home or in the community.

### **Leave**

Full-time staff have 25 days annual leave, plus bank holidays (pro rata for part-time roles). We close for the days between Christmas and New Year and these days are given as additional leave entitlement (pro rata).

We offer five paid days of emergency/compassionate leave (pro rata) to help you manage unexpected life events.

### **Wellbeing benefits**

We have a workplace wellbeing scheme provided by a small team of staff champions. All staff get the opportunity to volunteer to be a champion and champions are allocated an hour per week to do this role. Champions organise wellbeing activities and run a regular wellbeing survey, giving staff the chance to input to improving wellbeing in the workplace.

Our Employee Assistance Programme gives you and your immediate family access to a 24/7, 365 confidential helpline and you'll have access to a smartphone app with personalised wellbeing content.

Half Day Wellbeing Leave per annum

We cover the cost of an annual standard eye test and annual flu vaccination for all staff, regardless of your role.

### **Financial benefits**

We offer the opportunity for staff to save for their retirement by providing a workplace pension scheme, with options for matched contributions up to 6%.

You'll be eligible for the company sick pay scheme, which increases with each year served up to 6 weeks full pay, 6 weeks half pay after five years of service.

### **Learning and development**

You'll have protected time during regular supervision sessions with your line manager to reflect on and plan the work you do.

We provide a wide range of learning opportunities, including shadowing other staff, as well as regular training courses.

## **Who you'll work with**

The Housing Team is an exciting and established team within the organisation.

The Housing service enables individuals experiencing a mild to moderate mental health condition to live independently in their own homes.

Through bespoke, non-intrusive support, delivered by a team of Housing Officers, supported by the Housing Operations Lead, each person is provided with the tools to sustain their

tenancy and gain the confidence and skills to move on to independent living.

Lancashire Mind works in partnership with several housing associations and manages a varied portfolio on their behalf, which comprises of properties ranging from one-person flats to multi occupancy shared living across the Chorley, Preston, and South Ribble areas of Lancashire.

Most of our properties are currently in central Lancashire; however, we are building links with other local authorities to extend the service in other parts of the county.

## Your role

The Housing Officer is responsible for the provision of intensive housing management support to a caseload of tenants. This involves building a relationship with the tenant and ensuring they are fully involved in their support planning process, achieving the best outcomes for them wherever possible.

The support we provide includes, but is not limited to:

Help to understand and manage a tenancy.

Help to claim housing benefit and other welfare benefits.

Help to pay bills, manage finances, and learn effective budgeting.

Signposting to other services e.g., mental health, occupational therapy, adult social care, drug and

alcohol services, to help our tenants keep physically and mentally healthy and encourage the development of social and daily living skills.

Ultimately working towards a move to general needs accommodation.

Keeping people safe is an integral part of the role and the Housing Officer is responsible for responding to any safeguarding concerns or reports of anti-social behaviour promptly and to work with any relevant services to keep people safe.

This is a challenging and varied job, and we require someone who can work with individuals with a diverse range of mental health conditions and with complex barriers to overcome. The successful candidate will need to be a strong team player, as well as being able to work on their own initiative with minimum supervision.

An important part of the role is working in partnership with other local services. Services include Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol, Primary Care, Housing Associations and Local Authorities. Housing Officers also ensure the properties we manage are well maintained and safe through regular health and safety checks.

**Above all, we want someone who believes in our vision of a Lancashire where everyone has the opportunity to have the best mental health and wellbeing possible.**



# Job description

**Job title:** Housing Officer

**Hours:** Full-time, 35 hours per week

**Contract:** 12 Months

**Salary:** £24,337 per annum

**Responsible to:** Housing Operations Lead

**Location:** Option to work from the office in Chorley or a mix of home and office working. As this role requires extensive travel to multiple locations in Lancashire, a full driver's license and access to transport is required.

## Overview

Under the direction of the Housing Operations Lead, the Housing Officer manages a caseload of tenants to maintain their tenancy in properties that are managed by Lancashire Mind. The Housing Officer provides a housing management service to tenants including help with budgeting, managing bills and claiming the correct benefits, to enable the tenant to sustain their tenancy. The Housing Officer develops strong working relationships with local services to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting their tenants.

## Main duties and responsibilities

- To manage a caseload of tenants from the point of moving into the property to leaving the service.
- Ensure regular communication and support through home visits and phone calls as appropriate.
- Work with each tenant to agree a support plan to enable them to maintain their tenancy and move towards independent living.
- Assess progress against the support plan and adjust as necessary.
- Ensure that properties are maintained to a good standard, reporting any repairs promptly to the relevant housing association.
- Carrying out and recording health and safety checks.
- Help the tenant to develop life skills to help them maintain their tenancy and manage their mental health e.g., budgeting, managing bills, claiming appropriate benefits, completing paperwork, and maintaining their living environment
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with other local services and organisations that provide support services to tenants.
- Complete and update records of interactions with tenants on the internal database and input data accurately onto monitoring spreadsheets.
- Challenge and manage unacceptable behaviour of tenants, recording and reporting any incidents following the appropriate anti-social behaviour procedure.
- Ensure that safeguarding vulnerable adults' best practice is followed, reporting, and following up any safeguarding concerns following safeguarding procedures.
- Attending internal and external meetings, events, and training, as and when necessary
- Undertake other tasks and duties as deemed appropriate by the Housing Operations Lead or member of the Senior Management Team.

- Understand and implement Lancashire Mind's policies and procedures, including key policies such as safeguarding and information governance.
- Undertake flexible working hours, including travel across Lancashire (travel expenses reimbursed, except for usual commute to and from work) and some weekend and evening work when required (where possible, working hours don't go above the contracted hours but this is sometimes unavoidable, so we operate a time off in lieu (TOIL) policy, this allows any time owed to be taken back later).
- **Please note:** Lancashire Mind follows Safer Recruitment practices and have a commitment to safeguarding people who use our services. Therefore, this role is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check so all applicants must be willing to undergo the check. If invited to interview, we will ask you to provide evidence of your qualifications and right to work.



# Person specification

We only consider inviting to interview people who show that they possess the required experience, skills and personal attributes, as outlined in the table below. When completing your application form, please use examples from your professional and personal life to illustrate how you fulfil all the criteria to be assessed at application stage, you do not need to include the criteria that are assessed at interview only.

Lancashire Mind is committed to fighting racism and other forms of oppression. We want to be a great employer for all our staff, regardless of their background or characteristics. We recognise that not everyone is the same and that different people will require different support to fulfil their potential. We want to ensure Lancashire becomes a place of greater equity and inclusion. One thing we can do to work towards that goal is to ensure that our staff team is representative of the diverse communities across Lancashire, and particularly those communities we know face mental health inequalities. We particularly encourage applications from those communities and from anyone with experience of living with a mental health condition.

	Criteria	Assessed at application or interview
<b>Knowledge and experience</b>	1. At least two years' experience working with vulnerable people either in a supported or social housing setting.	A
	2. Qualification, training, evidence of CPD, or relevant experience in mental health.	A
	3. Experience of working with and providing a service to people living with a mental health condition and helping them overcome complex barriers to mental wellbeing.	A and I
	4. Experience of liaising with social, medical and care agencies to co-ordinate support for service users.	A and I
	5. Experience of safeguarding vulnerable adults and following organisational safeguarding policy and procedure.	A and I
	6. Experience of housing management and tenancy related issues.	A and I
	7. Understanding of issues faced within social housing.	A and I
	8. Knowledge and understanding of professional boundaries, lone working, confidentiality, and data protection policies and procedures.	A and I
<b>Skills, abilities and competencies</b>	1. Excellent interpersonal skills.	A and I
	2. Excellent communication skills and confident communicating with a wide range of audiences.	A and I
	3. Ability to remain calm under pressure and deal with challenging situations.	A and I

	4. Ability to work independently and manage own workload to meet deadlines without direct supervision.	A
	5. Excellent numeracy and literacy skills and able to keep accurate and detailed records.	A
	6. Excellent standard of IT skills and the confidence to use Microsoft Outlook, Word and Excel and the ability to learn new software packages.	Test at interview
	7. Access to a car for transport and full driver's licence	A
<b>Personal attributes</b>	1. Resilient and committed to promoting mental wellbeing for all	A and I
	2. A demonstrable personal commitment to equal opportunities and challenging discrimination	Interview only
	3. Positive, enthusiastic and friendly attitude	Interview only
	4. Take accountability, and hold others to account	Interview only



# How to apply

If you would like to discuss the job before applying, contact Jeanette Colclough – Housing & Wellbeing Lead [jeanettecolclough@lancashiremind.org.uk](mailto:jeanettecolclough@lancashiremind.org.uk)

Applications must be submitted using a Lancashire Mind job application form, which can be downloaded from our website [www.lancashiremind.org.uk/recruitment](http://www.lancashiremind.org.uk/recruitment) or requested by emailing [admin@lancashiremind.org.uk](mailto:admin@lancashiremind.org.uk).

PLEASE NOTE: We use a generic application form for all job posts – please read the instructions within the form that explain how to complete it for the job you are applying for.

## **The deadline for applications is 9am, Monday 25<sup>th</sup> of November**

Email your completed application form to [admin@lancashiremind.org.uk](mailto:admin@lancashiremind.org.uk). If you have any issues opening, editing or saving the application form please contact us. Do not convert your form to a PDF, otherwise it will not be possible for us to remove the identifying information before sending your application to the recruitment panel.

Late applications will not be accepted. Those who do not adequately demonstrate how they fulfil the criteria required at application stage, will not be considered for shortlisting.

## **Interviews for this post are scheduled to take place on Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> of December**

Interviews will be held in-person at the Lancashire Mind office in Chorley.

If you have not heard from us by two weeks after the deadline, please assume that you have not been shortlisted on this occasion. The organisation regrets that it cannot provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants at the shortlisting stage.

If you have any questions about the application process or require support with the process, please contact our Operations Team on 01257 231660.

# What to expect at interview

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an interview, which will usually take place at the Lancashire Mind office in Chorley. Occasionally, they are held at other venues in Lancashire or virtually via Microsoft Teams. Details of the venue and times will be included within the email invite. You can expect the following if you are attending an interview:

- All interviews include a task and set of questions asked by a panel of three people.
- Some interviews include a presentation, which will need to be prepared in advance of the interview. Where a presentation is required, we provide a minimum of 7 days' notice to allow time for preparation. We recommend applicants pencil time into their diary for preparing a presentation, in the event they are shortlisted.
- The interview task is used to test IT skills and the ability to complete a task related to the role being applied for. 30 minutes is allowed for the task, which usually takes place before the panel. There's no need to do any preparation for the task.
- We allow 30 minutes for candidates to read the panel questions and make notes, which can be referred to during the interview.
- The panel interview will usually consist of between 6 and 8 questions and takes around 30 to 45 minutes.
- We aim to support people to feel as comfortable as possible at interview and are happy for you to ask for clarification on any of the questions asked by the panel, as well as taking a few moments to think about a question before answering.
- Once the panel have asked their questions, candidates can ask questions about the job and/or Lancashire Mind.
- We can adapt the interview process for individuals where required. There is space on the job application form to request reasonable adjustments.

## **Lancashire Mind**

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