

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title:	Housing Adviser
Location:	Housing Matters, Easton, Bristol
Accountable to:	Advice Service Lead
Hours and leave:	35 hours per week 25 days + Bank Holidays
Benefits:	Employer pension, Cycle to Work scheme, Employee Assistance Programme
Salary:	£31,435 – £35,469 (Dependant on experience and qualifications)
Contract:	Permanent

Who we are

Housing Matters (Bristol), is a specialist housing advice, support and advocacy charity in Bristol. We are a small team of 12, with 7 Housing Advisers currently on the team.

We believe quality housing is a human right. We're here to give anyone in and around Bristol the knowledge and support they need to live in safe, secure homes. We work tirelessly with clients, offering both brief guidance, holistic support and long-term casework. We amplify clients' voices to influence housing policy and empower people to fight for the home they deserve.

Our vision

Our vision is a society where everyone has a place, they're happy to call home.

Our mission

We are experts in housing advice, support and advocacy, here to help the people of Bristol and beyond navigate the path to a safe and secure home. We aim to find unique, long-term solutions for our clients, whatever their needs.

Our values

People First – Informed – Dedicated – Inclusive – Resourceful

Role Summary: You will provide specialised housing advice, support and advocacy on a range of issues including landlord and tenant disputes, homelessness, housing related benefits and rehousing. As well as providing legal advice, you will offer the

support and encouragement needed to motivate and empower clients to resolve their own housing issues.

About you

We are looking for an experienced individual to join our team. The ideal candidate will align with our vision, mission and values and be able to demonstrate this effectively through their attitude and approach to work. The post-holder is required to be self-motivated with strong communication and organisation skills, able to work as part of a team and manage their own workload.

We're keen to have a staff team which is representative of the community we serve and also welcome applications from people with life experience of housing and homelessness issues to help us to shape and develop our service.

Responsibilities

Advice & Support

- Provide a Housing Advice Service (telephone, email and at community centre drop ins) on housing & homelessness matters, to individuals and agencies.
- Triage telephone and email enquiries, assessing the nature of the query, urgency and most appropriate pathway, making onward referrals when appropriate.
- Carry a caseload of clients, providing information, advice, practical help & advocacy
- Work closely with partner agencies; referring clients for specialist advice and joint-working to progress cases.
- Provide advice and support under one of our partnership projects as lead adviser, developing and/or maintaining the partnership relationship to ensure clients are easily referred and receive the best possible outcome whilst working closely with the partner agency/agencies and meeting any project objectives/targets set.
- Outreach activities e.g. delivering community advice drop-in sessions – where this is aligned with project and partnership activities.
- Offer a client-centred, holistic approach to promote the best outcome for the client.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date records of enquiries and casework, using case monitoring software and database.
- Undertake training to maintain up-to-date knowledge of legal changes and practice, improve personal skills and knowledge required for the role.
- Where necessary/appropriate supervise volunteers who are supporting the advice service.
- Participate and contribute to Case Review meetings to support, advise and assist other members of the advice team, sharing learning and knowledge to strengthen the team overall.

General responsibilities

- Work alongside volunteers, interns and trustees of the charity.
- Engage with and contribute to the development of the advice service as the charity grows.
- Support community outreach to engage a wider audience within the community, which may include supporting with development and delivery of training materials.
- Deliver and support the delivery of activities to encourage organisations, their staff and beneficiaries to seek housing advice early, to avoid housing crisis.
- Work within Housing Matters (Bristol) policies and procedures, including equal opportunities, health and safety, confidentiality and safeguarding.
- Undertake other such duties as may be required.

Person Specification

While we aim to recruit a candidate who meets all essential criteria, we would consider applicants that meet most of the criteria as training would be available for the right candidate.

		Essential	Desirable
Education, Vocational Training & Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education to degree level, or equivalent relevant qualification, or substantial training and experience in a relevant role• Evidence of continuing professional development and training	X X	
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 1 years recent experience providing advice, support and/or casework on housing or related issues• Experience of providing advice at a specialist level (e.g. advocacy at court or tribunal)• Experience of community outreach and delivering events to the public• Experience in delivering presentations and/or training workshops to groups• Experience of service user involvement	X	 X X X

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of training and/or supporting volunteers • Experience of working with vulnerable people • Proven experience of working under pressure and achieving individual and team targets • Experience of working in a small and growing organisation 	X	X
Knowledge & Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to date knowledge of housing legislation and recent case law • Knowledge of legal issues related to housing and homelessness 	X	X
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to date knowledge of welfare benefits, welfare reform changes and any recent case law • Knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding policies, procedures and processes • Generalist knowledge of financial capability and debt issues. • Understanding of the advice and voluntary sector • Understanding of the needs of service users in a disadvantaged area 	X	X
Technical Skills & Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficient in computer skills e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook • Proficient at utilising electronic case management systems • Ability to maintain accurate case records, maintaining confidentiality at all times • Excellent level of attention to detail 	X	X

<p>Interpersonal skills, motivation and commitment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and verbal communication skills • Able to work both as part of a team and on own initiative, prioritising and managing own workload and time to meet targets and deadlines • Enthusiastic, flexible and confident approach to work • Commitment to the aims of Housing Matters • A commitment to work within Housing Matters equal opportunity policy 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	
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