

Housing Support Practitioner

Salary: £15ph

Contract and term: Self-employed 12 month contract, with a 3-month probation

Hours: 35 hours per week Mon – Fri with some evenings when needed

Location: Flexible, with time split between home, our Southwark office 2-3 days per week

Start date:

Deadline: 10th of April 2024

Are you passionate about supporting people out of homelessness? Kineara has a new vacancy for an experienced Housing Support Practitioner to join our small and dedicated team for our Private Renters Project in Southwark.

About the project

In mid-2020 at the height of the Covid 19 lockdowns, we mobilised to deliver a project to respond to rising rent arrears and financial instability facing renters. In an innovative partnership with Southwark Council, Southwark Law Centre, and Impact for Urban Health, we've been supporting close to 200 private renters over the last 3 years who have been threatened with eviction by their landlords, or are living in temporary accommodation, to sustain their tenancies and/or find onward housing in the social or private sector that is suitable for their health, needs and aspirations.

After a successful start, Kineara continues to receive funding to reach more renters and be part of Southwark's ongoing support response for local residents. We've already delivered crucial crisis support to vulnerable renters and are looking for a passionate housing support worker to be part of the next phase of the project.

You can find out more about the work [here](#).

About Kineara

Kineara is a unique community interest company that supports people in poverty across London who facing barriers to housing, employment and education. We break down barriers, provide holistic support for families, vulnerable adults, and school pupils, and deliver intensive one-to-one interventions to those in need of extra help through challenging times. We use holistic, trauma-informed methods, partnership working and a flexible, non-judgemental approach that puts the needs of those we work with first.

About the role

We are looking for an experienced, enthusiastic, and energetic support worker to take up a full-time role within our organisation as a Housing Support Practitioner in our small and dedicated team. The role will be based mostly in Southwark, and you will be working in partnership with the Council's housing officers, solicitors, community services, social prescribers, and mental health support workers to coordinate tailored support for each client to avoid eviction and sustain tenancies, mediating with landlords where necessary and providing advice for onward housing when needed with the support of the Housing Link Worker. The objectives of these programmes are to avoid evictions, sustain tenancies or move to a better suited property, increase employment opportunities, improve wellbeing, and increase educational outcomes. You will be working in partnership with other stakeholders such as schools and health professionals to improve family health, build relationships and engage families and individuals and their networks of support.

About you

You will have experience of working with individuals with complex needs. You will be an enthusiastic person who is self-motivated, confident and thrives when working independently with a passion to support change. You will have excellent interpersonal skills, experience delivering holistic support, be a solution-minded thinker, have a good understanding of strength-based approaches and be able to work sensitively and empathetically with people in vulnerable circumstances. You will also have experience working in a systemic and therapeutic way. It is also important to us that you have the competency to work with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds. To work as part of a team and independently, the roles require you to think creatively and use the resources around you effectively.

Job description and main responsibilities

- To deliver Kineara's intervention supporting those in the private rented sector whose tenancy is at risk or needing to find alternative accommodation. Provide practical and emotional support to improve security and sustainability of the tenancy and the client's overall wellbeing.
- Use a holistic flexible approach to support families and individuals with regards to their specific individual support needs, while working towards overall project objectives and personal, tailored client outcomes.
- To communicate efficiently with our partnership organisations regarding the delivery of the interventions. Attend regular update/ review meetings with stakeholders.
- Liaise with our in-house Housing Link Worker to help the clients find new accommodation and explore their housing options.
- Work alongside Housing Officers, Southwark Law Centre, Social Workers and other professionals with the aim to build a working support network for the family.

- Communicate with landlords and property agencies about properties and viewings to support the client finding a new home.
- Help set maximise the family income by applying for financial grants such as discretionary housing payments and council tax reduction, applying for household items such as white goods and beds, helping with benefits and reducing utility debts.
- Refer families to other suitable organisations such as counselling, substance misuse treatment, educational/employability courses, Mental Health Services (CAMHS, SLAM)
- Record case work data for monitoring.
- Overall be the voice of the family and the individuals who need your commitment and support.
- Presentations to introduce the service/programmes within different teams, departments and potential stakeholders.
- Contribute to blogs, articles or case studies about the project with the Communications Team.

What you can expect from Kineara

Kineara will offer you an opportunity to be part of a dedicated small team that works closely together while encouraging independence and autonomy. This is a busy and hands-on role where each day is different, and you will be based in our office in Southwark, at home, and in the community doing occasional home visits. The role will provide you with support and supervision from our experienced project manager, as well as the flexibility to work to your clients' needs. With us, you will have an active voice in the organisation and your input in how our organisation develops will be highly valued. We are committed to providing a nurturing environment in which our staff can develop their skills, take on new opportunities and challenges, and grow professionally.

We work with many clients with complex needs, mental health needs and who have faced trauma and we understand delivering support in this environment can be emotionally challenging. We ensure that wellbeing of our staff is a priority. Kineara provides a wellbeing package for all practitioners to encourage work/life balance and self-care for our staff.

Kineara invests in its workforce, we will be providing on the job training in holistic working as well as accredited training for professional development.

We are committed to equality, diversity and to providing a non-oppressive and non-discriminatory environment for our staff – in exactly the same way we treat our clients. We are an active equal opportunities employer and so especially welcome applications from traditionally under-represented backgrounds.

Person Specification

Education, Qualifications & Training

Essential:

- NVQ Level 4 foundation or equivalent in relevant field e.g. Health, social care, adult education, education, working with parents.
- English and Maths GCSE at grade A-C or equivalent.

Desirable:

- CBT, NLP or Family Therapy qualification
- A relevant degree
- Training in trauma informed approaches and / or holistic support

Knowledge & Experience

Essential:

- 2 years direct experience of undertaking assessments and devising action plans for individual or families with complex needs for a local authority, Registered Social Landlord, community organisation or support service.
- Practical knowledge and experience of working with vulnerable individuals including refugees, those with mental and physical health and families with complex needs who typically find it difficult to engage with services
- Able to communicate clearly and have honest, and sometimes challenging conversations with those we work with
- Experience completing person-centred one-to-one assessments with clients to identify support needs
- Understanding of housing law, direct experience of working in partnership housing associations, local authorities, homeless organisations and public sector stakeholders
- Good understanding of policy and procedures related to homelessness, benefits and housing market

- Liaise and apply for appropriate local authority support such as rent in advance, deposit and incentive schemes, assisting with access to Discretionary Housing Payments for those that are unable to maintain payments on rent due date and setting up payments directly to the landlord
- Complete Financial action plans, apply for grants for household items
- Taking the role as a lead professional, organising and chairing meetings with professionals
- Good understanding of child protection policies and procedures and the importance of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Good understanding of Systemic theory, strength-based theory, task-centred, trauma informed approach and whole family working approaches
- Experience of setting appropriate professional boundaries with individuals and families
- Experience of engaging families in community activities and events
- Knowledge and direct experience of developing and maintaining effective relationships
- Experience of recording progress and monitoring outcomes.

Desirable:

- Experience of successful grant applications
- Demonstrable experience of sharing information to improve outcomes
- Knowledge of trauma informed approaches
- Knowledge of additional support services available for families and experience of signposting or referring families to these services
- Experience of using holistic methods to provide whole family support
- Experience in supporting families to make positive choices

Skills & Attributes

Essential:

- Excellent communication skills.
- Reliable, with high integrity and strong work ethic
- Highly engaging and able to motivate resistant and hard to reach families
- Confident and able to work alone and complete home visits when required
- Create, maintain and develop relationships with families and professionals and to maintain professional boundaries
- Able to keep excellent records of work and confident with IT systems
- To work in a non-confrontational manner and show empathy towards those we work with
- Committed to improving outcomes for families
- Committed to anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice
- Effective verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to travel locally and across London

Desirable:

- Fluency in a second language

HOW TO APPLY: Please send a CV and a cover letter explaining how you meet the criteria for the role. Please also include:

- Why you wish to apply for this role
- What you would like to gain from this role
- Your relevant experience, knowledge and skills, based on the person specification above.
- What other qualities you have that you could bring to the role
- Whether you have an up-to-date DBS and DRB check.
- When you are available to begin work

Send your CV and letter to: Sandra Axell, saxell@kineara.co.uk. We look forward to receiving your application!