

Northumberland County Council  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Post Title:</b> Rent Deposit Guarantee and Support Officer	<b>Director/Service/Sector:</b> Housing and Public Protection		<b>Office Use</b>
<b>Grade:</b> Band 6	<b>Workplace:</b> Council Offices, Civic centre, Blyth (Homeworking)		JE ref: 3768 HRMS ref:
<b>Responsible to:</b> Private Sector Housing Manager	<b>Date:</b> October 2020	<b>Manager Level:</b>	
<b>Job Purpose:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To develop, implement and review the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme (RDGS), including developing the supporting documentation.</li> <li>● To work with households in housing need to provide a RDGS giving access to suitable, affordable privately rented accommodation.</li> <li>● To provide a basic level of support to families and individuals who may have complex needs and who are moving into new accommodation (Complex needs may include housing support related needs, physical/mental health and financial needs)</li> <li>● To maximise tenant's potential for maintaining a successful tenancy using relevant signposting where necessary.</li> <li>● To recognise additional support needs, such as mental health issues and promote effective multi agency working, including liaise with Adult Services, Mental Health teams and Safeguarding to ensure tenants are fully equipped and supported to maintain and sustain their tenancy.</li> <li>● To work closely with Private Sector Landlords to increase the number of properties accessible via a rent deposit guarantee. Including attending forums, events and landlord platforms (virtual where necessary) to ensure landlords are aware of the service.</li> <li>● To improve housing conditions and management standards in the Private Rented Sector, including through the promotion of a scheme of Property Accreditation.</li> <li>● To implement a scheme of landlord accreditation in order to bring privately owned properties up to standard, enabling them to be rented out to possible social housing and other tenants, so as to maximise the usage of the existing housing stock.</li> <li>●</li> </ul>			
<b>Resources</b>	Staff	May support junior staff, trainees or learners as appropriate.	
	Finance	Be responsible for the management and monitoring of the project budget of £10000 and the authority for the allocation of funds to an agreed limit of the budget Day to day responsibility for the allocation of the RDGS budget to source accommodation for vulnerable clients.	
	Physical	Maintain and operate corporate information systems. Responsible for confidential valuable documents e.g. financial and benefit documentation. Maintain accurate financial records for audit purposes	
	Clients	Regular contact with vulnerable people who are homeless, who require complex support, advocating for client with mental health and drug and alcohol issues by liaising with partners, support organisations and colleagues, internal and external providers ; Private landlords, public, elected Members, senior managers and staff throughout the Council.	
<b>Duties and key result areas:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To actively work in partnership with the Council's Homelessness and Housing Options Team and other partners to assist the Council to meet its statutory homelessness duty by sourcing suitable private rental accommodation.</li> <li>2. To work with households accommodated temporarily to ensure settled homes are secured either through Part VI offers or nominations to private landlords.</li> <li>3. To promote the scheme to internal and external partners through a range of appropriate methods.</li> <li>4. To work with clients who are potentially in crisis to meet their housing needs and to signpost to appropriate services.</li> <li>5. To carry out a risk assessment to establish client's suitability for participation in the scheme through an interview process.</li> </ol>			

6. To assist clients to identify accommodation suitable to their needs, including undertaking a detailed financial assessment.
7. To provide vital support to tenants to set up and maintain a tenancy, including support to make applications for housing benefit and council tax benefit as appropriate. Signposting to relevant agencies where necessary.
8. To ensure tenants are fully aware of their responsibilities as a private tenant and offer basic training and tenancy advice to ensure this is followed through.
9. To facilitate tenants with the skills, knowledge and support they need to enable them to be successful in their tenancy, using relevant signposting where necessary.
10. To recognise additional support needs, such as mental health issues and promote effective multi agency working, including liaising with Adult Services, Mental Health teams and Safeguarding to ensure tenants are fully equipped and supported to maintain and sustain their tenancy.  
To work with a range of stakeholders to engage landlords and letting agents to support and participate in the RDGS and other Council services such as Landlords Development Fora.
11. To develop and maintain the Council's relationship with Private Sector landlords, through Landlord Forum meetings, including the implementation of the Council's Scheme of Landlord Accreditation and the inspection of properties using the Housing, Health & Safety Rating System
12. To assist in the development and review of the Council's Scheme of Property Accreditation.
13. Delivering actions from the Private Sector Housing Strategy, including inspecting and prioritising empty properties, and providing advice and assistance to owners to bring properties back into use.
14. Working with other Council officers from Legal, Planning, Public Protection and Council Tax, etc to identify problematic long-term empty properties and take the necessary action, including Empty Dwelling Management Orders and enforced sale where appropriate, to bring these properties back into use
15. To provide guidance and assistance to clients in establishing their tenancy, including signposting to appropriate saving products.
- 16.
17. To serve as a single point of contact for landlords participating in the scheme on alleged breaches of tenancy.
18. Utilise relevant ICT systems to maintain accurate and up to date records, files and statistical information.
19. To ensure that accurate records are maintained in accordance with the Council's IT system.
20. To promote the service, the Council and partner organisations positively at all times.
21. To proactively work with the landlord and tenant using mediation and negotiation to ensure successful and sustainable tenancies and to reduce repeat homelessness

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this job description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

**Work Arrangements**

Physical requirements:	Ability to drive. Some programmable outdoor site work
Transport requirements:	The work involves the need to travel to locations across the county, both on site and at Council offices.
Working patterns:	May be required to occasionally work outside of normal working hours and to attend evening meetings.
Working conditions:	Generally, office-based, with some working in private homes.

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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

<b>Post Title:</b> Rent Deposit Guarantee and Support Officer	<b>Director/Service/Sector:</b> Housing and Public Protection	Ref:3768
<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Assess by</b>
<b>Knowledge and Qualifications</b>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good standard of education to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent</li> <li>• Understands the diverse functions of a large complex public organisation</li> <li>• An active appreciation of the wider practical issues facing housing</li> <li>• Understands the relationship between costs, quality, customer care and performance and actively monitors progress within the department</li> <li>• Actively undertaking ongoing continuous professional and personal development</li> <li>• Understanding of relevant legislation including Housing Act 1996, Homeless Act 2002, Landlord and Tenant Law, Protection from Eviction Act and associated housing law</li> <li>• Sound understanding of housing policies and procedures in a public sector environment.</li> <li>• Ability to provide initial advice regarding finance and welfare benefits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively studying for an NVQ Level 4 or equivalent in a relevant discipline</li> </ul>	
<b>Experience</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competence in using Microsoft Office, Oracle applications, word processing, spreadsheets, Google and database systems.</li> <li>• Thorough knowledge and experience in a relevant context and service</li> <li>• An active desire to provide effective customer centred services</li> <li>• Evidence of work experience in selecting and applying the full range of professional methods, tools and techniques in a wide range of work situations.</li> <li>• Experience in engaging effectively with others and building productive partnerships.</li> <li>• Experience in contributing to the development and implementation of projects to successfully achieve set objectives.</li> <li>• Good understanding of Housing Benefit, Universal Credit and associated benefits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent experience of working with private landlords, landlord accreditation and rent deposit guarantees</li> <li>• Recent experience of bringing empty homes back into use</li> </ul>	
<b>Skills and competencies</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective IT skills and ability to understand and develop the use of ITC to achieve work objectives</li> <li>• Confident and competent in expressing own views and an active participant in internal and external meetings</li> <li>• Numerate and skilled at analysing/reasoning with statistics</li> <li>• Applies a methodical approach to problem solving</li> <li>• Adopts a collaborative approach to work.</li> <li>• Have the ability to deal with more complex clients with numerous challenging issues</li> <li>• Ability to deal sympathetically with customers in stressful circumstances and maintains a professional demeanour throughout.</li> <li>• Clear understanding of the needs of customers.</li> <li>• The ability to gain relevant information quickly and effectively.</li> <li>• Able to work alone using own initiative as well as part of a team.</li> <li>• Is an effective advocate for the Directorate both within and externally.</li> <li>• Support colleagues and demonstrate relevant work processes.</li> <li>• Able to handle problems and difficult situations calmly and sensitively.</li> <li>• Negotiation/mediation skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a sound understanding of equal opportunities and diversity issues in relation to employment and service delivery</li> </ul>	

<b>Physical, mental and emotional demands</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Normally works from a seated position with some need to walk, bend or carry items</li> <li>● Need to maintain general awareness with lengthy periods of enhanced concentration</li> <li>● Regular contact with public/clients in distress</li> <li>● Regular contact with public/clients in dispute with the County Council</li> <li>● Be able to work under pressure</li> <li>● Ability to work alone, with support as and when required.</li> <li>● Be self-aware and constantly risk assess and manage situations that either pose or can increase risks or threats of harm to Officers.</li> </ul>		
<b>Motivation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Customer focused and able to deliver within tight timescales</li> <li>● Dependable, reliable and keeps good time</li> <li>● Models and encourages high standards of honesty, integrity, openness and respect for others</li> <li>● Helps managers create a positive work culture in which diverse, individual contributions and perspectives are valued</li> <li>● Proactive and achievement orientated</li> <li>● Works with little direct supervision</li> <li>● A positive, flexible approach to work</li> </ul>		