Northumberland County Council

Job Description

Senior Private Sector Housing Officer

Reference: **P015**
Date: **June 2026**

Job Family: **Property/Property Management**
Level: **2**
Band: **7**
Career Track: **Technical, Professional and Supervisory**

Job Purpose

To deliver a specialist tenancy relations service within the private rented sector, providing expert advice, investigation, mediation and enforcement in response to the Renters' Rights Act 2025 (in force from 1 May 2026).

The role focuses on protecting tenants from unlawful eviction, harassment and unfair practices, while supporting landlords to understand and comply with their legal obligations. Through effective tenancy relations work, the post will help prevent homelessness, resolve disputes, promote lawful and sustainable tenancies, and improve standards and confidence in the Council's enforcement role.

Service Purpose

The Housing Service delivers the Council's place shaping role by promoting safe, good quality and affordable housing across the county. The Housing Service acts both as a landlord of approximately 8,300 residential properties and a Strategic Housing Service that includes prevention of homelessness, improving standards in the private rented sector, and supporting the development of sustainable communities.

Duties and Responsibilities

Tenancy Relations and Legal Advice

- Provide a specialist tenancy relations service delivering expert advice to tenants, landlords and agents on rights, responsibilities and tenancy matters.
- Interpret and apply housing legislation, including the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and related frameworks, ensuring advice is accurate and legally robust.

- Advise on lawful tenancy management, including tenancy types, rent setting, notice requirements and compliant routes to possession.
- Provide general housing advice and signposting on private sector housing issues, landlord and tenant matters, and housing-related concerns.

Investigation and Regulation of Tenancy Breaches

- Investigate complaints relating to unlawful eviction, harassment, discrimination and wider breaches of tenancy law.
- Identify and address prohibited or unfair practices, including illegal rent increases, rental bidding and excessive rent in advance.
- Ensure all investigative and regulatory activity complies with legislation, PACE and the Council's Enforcement Policy.

Case Management and Evidence

- Undertake interviews, property inspections and formal investigations to gather, assess and evaluate evidence.
- Maintain accurate, structured case files and records to support robust, proportionate and defensible decision-making.

Enforcement and Legal Proceedings

- Undertake enforcement action, including civil penalties, prosecutions, rent repayment orders and other regulatory interventions, working with Legal Services and partners.
- Prepare legal documentation and represent the Council in court or tribunal proceedings where required.
- Investigate breaches and utilise appropriate enforcement tools, including civil penalties, to address landlord non-compliance, supporting increased enforcement activity arising from the Renters Rights Act and contributing to service income through penalty recovery.

Tenancy Sustainment and Dispute Resolution

- Mediate between landlords and tenants to resolve disputes and promote early intervention to prevent escalation.
- Support tenancy sustainment and homelessness prevention through joint working with Housing Options and partners.

Landlord Engagement, Partnership Working and Service Delivery

- Develop and maintain effective relationships with landlords, agents and housing providers, supporting good practice and engagement initiatives such as landlord forums or accreditation.
- Work collaboratively with internal teams and external partners to share intelligence, support enforcement activity and deliver coordinated housing services and projects.

Strategic and Specialist Responsibility

- Act as the Council's lead specialist adviser on tenancy relations and private rented sector enforcement matters.
- Interpret complex housing legislation, case law and emerging regulatory requirements, developing procedures, operational guidance and best practice standards for use across the Housing Service.
- Lead the implementation of legislative change and provide specialist advice on complex, high-risk or precedent-setting cases requiring advanced professional judgement.
- Develop and maintain tenancy relations investigation frameworks, case management standards and service procedures to ensure consistency, compliance and defensible enforcement decision-making.

Other

- Directly line manage a small team, being responsible for appraisals, allocation of work, supervision, and training & development

Person Specification

Professional and Technical Requirements

Qualifications

- Educated to Level 4 standard (degree, foundation degree, HNC or equivalent), or able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge through relevant experience.

Knowledge, skills and Experience

- Comprehensive knowledge of private rented sector legislation, including the Renters' Rights Act 2025, Housing Act 2004, Protection from Eviction Act 1977 and Housing Act 1988, with the ability to interpret and apply legislative changes in practice.
- Strong understanding of tenancy reform and possession law, including Section 8 procedures, abolition of Section 21, and the transition to periodic tenancies under the Renters' Rights Act framework.

- Detailed knowledge of homelessness legislation and prevention duties, including the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), and the wider impact of housing insecurity, unlawful eviction and tenancy breakdown.
- Working knowledge of enforcement frameworks and regulatory practice, including the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE), evidential standards, and civil and criminal enforcement powers.
- Experience of applying enforcement powers in practice, including civil penalties, prosecutions, rent repayment orders and associated financial recovery processes.
- Proven experience of delivering tenancy relations, housing advice or enforcement services within a local authority, advice agency or similar regulatory environment.
- Substantial experience of investigating housing-related complaints, including unlawful eviction, harassment, discrimination and breaches of landlord and tenant legislation.
- Experience of managing complex and competing caseloads, meeting statutory deadlines and maintaining accurate, legally compliant records and case management systems.
- Experience of working with vulnerable households, with a sound understanding of safeguarding, equality legislation (Equality Act 2010), and barriers to accessing and sustaining housing.
- Strong negotiation, mediation and problem-solving skills, with the ability to resolve disputes and achieve proportionate, tenancy-sustaining outcomes.
- Ability to gather, assess and present evidence, including preparing legally robust case files, statutory notices, witness statements and documentation for court or tribunal proceedings.
- Effective partnership, governance and organisational skills, including collaborative working with Legal Services, Police and partners; understanding of UK GDPR; performance reporting; and the ability to adapt to legislative, policy and service change.

Core Competency Requirements

- **Communication**: Tailors communication to audience and context. Uses listening and questioning techniques to clarify complex issues and support team understanding.

- **Collaboration**: Coordinates with colleagues and partners to deliver shared goals and improve service outcomes.

- **Service Delivery**: Identifies and resolves service issues, improves processes, and ensures policy alignment. Promotes efficiency and avoids waste through practical improvements.

- **Decision-Making**: Uses evidence and judgement to resolve issues and improve delivery.

- **Digital & Data Literacy**: Interprets data to improve services. Applies knowledge of digital risks and ethical data use. Uses basic analytical techniques to support decision making.

- **Adaptability**: Adjusts approach responsively to evolving needs and priorities. Identifies opportunities for continuous improvement and supports others through change.

- **Problem-Solving**: Analyses problems and applies knowledge to develop practical solutions and suggest improvements.

- **Leadership**: Supervises day-to-day activity and supports team development. Coordinates tasks and resources to meet the needs of the service.

Strengths

- **Problem Solver -** You take a positive approach to tackling problems. You find ways to identify suitable solutions.

- **Influencer -** You influence others, you articulate the rationale to gain their agreement.

- **Analytical -** You seek and analyse information to inform your decisions, based on the best available evidence.

- **Emotionally Intelligent -** You draw insight from your own emotions and those of others to show empathy.

- **Decisive -** You use your judgement. You take a considered approach to situations and tasks when making decisions.

Desirable

- A professional qualification in housing, law, or a related discipline (e.g. CIH, legal studies or advice work).
- Experience of preparing enforcement casework for legal proceedings, including civil penalties, prosecutions or tribunal cases.
- Evidence of specialist training in areas such as enforcement practice, safeguarding, mediation, or trauma-informed approaches.