

Role Profile

Role Title: Generic Housing Officer

Business Area: Housing

Department/Team: Neighbourhood /Tenancy Management

Reports to: Housing Operations Manager

Direct Reports and span of control: No direct reports

Dimensions (budget holder, level of contract/systems etc responsibility): The Hub, Local Authority CBL systems, ReACT, ROCC, Documotive.

Created/Reviewed date: November 2019

Role Purpose

To deliver comprehensive and proactive housing and neighbourhood management services to customers across the full range of tenures (rented, leasehold and shared ownership) and across the full range of specialisms including Lettings, Neighbourhoods, Anti-social Behaviour and Income Recovery. Balancing effective tenancy and estate management with customer satisfaction.

Key Accountabilities

- Responsible for undertaking a range of complex assessments to determine if a person, and their household, is eligible for a tenancy with Aster. This includes, but is not limited to: an affordability assessment, referencing, liaising with other teams within Aster, contacting a wide range of external agencies to determine risk, support needs and physical adaptation requirements, arranging face-to-face meetings with prospective new tenants, to ensure the property meets the household's needs.
- Taking the lead role in the letting of void and new properties to reduce any financial and reputational risk to Aster by ensuring that key performance indicators are met.
- Advertising all New Build properties and relets on a range of Choice Based Lettings Systems spanning 11 Local Authorities. Reviewing the shortlist to select a suitable applicant, paying due regard to any S106 arrangements, nomination agreements and local lettings plans.
- Work closely with colleagues in asset management and maintenance and any other Aster colleagues to ensure effective delivery of empty and new homes to limit loss of income with high levels of customer satisfaction.
- Provide a customer focused service, by developing local lettings plans, reviewing policies and procedures as well as complying with Aster's own and other regulatory standards.
- Attend regular site meetings, promotional events and pre-planning meetings to influence and support new development opportunities across the Region.
- Implement a risk-based approach to programme and complete Neighbourhood Inspections, with accountability for identifying and reporting risks through appropriate channels to Health and Safety compliance.

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- To increase customer satisfaction within the Neighbourhood locality, by identifying and overseeing estate improvements.
- Identify and develop relationships with external and partner agencies, stakeholders and statutory bodies to ensure an integrated contribution to company objectives.
- Assist with customer enquiries regarding repairs and maintenance complaints by liaising with contractors, internal teams and operatives to resolve ongoing or outstanding issues.
- Promote, facilitate and authorise mutual exchanges including carrying out property inspections to identify any rechargeable works.
- Dealing effectively and decisively with all forms of tenancy and lease management to include managing breaches, working with customers towards a resolution, identifying support needs, agreeing action plans with an emphasis on collaborative multi-agency working and where required taking appropriate legal action.
- Act as a first point of contact for all home ownership and leasehold customers to provide a comprehensive housing management service to ensure compliance with the terms of our leases.
- To liaise with the S20 Officer to ensure customers are actively involved in shaping the service delivery of their estates and ensure they are aware of major works and cyclical decorations due at their properties.
- Draft and serve legal notices including Notice to Quit, Sections 21s or Notices of Seeking Possession where there has been a serious breach of tenancy conditions.
- Initiate legal action, including the completion of court applications, drafting witness statements and preparing court bundles. Attend court to give evidence in support of any legal applications, and take directions as ordered by the court. Litigating in person and working with solicitors for cases requiring instruction.
- Proactively highlight and investigate cases of tenancy fraud, to ensure our properties are being occupied by the correct customers.
- Provide a comprehensive service to all customers and residents to restrict and minimise rent arrears and other debts.
- Support and advise customers in money management and entitlement to welfare benefits, to include completing benefit applications and providing guidance to accessing a full range of benefits successfully. Agree appropriate payments plans. Refer to internal support teams or external agencies as necessary for debt counselling issues.
- Implement and maintain an up to date working knowledge of benefit legislation, welfare reform, debt recovery law and methods of enforcement for various types of debt and tenures. Maintain awareness of and implement best practice and protocols regarding debt prevention and arrears recovery.

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- Implement and comply with the policies and procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour and tenancy management.
- Investigate all complaints of anti-social behaviour, nuisance and harassment, by utilising all available methods of dealing with ASB to resolve any breaches of the tenancy. Interview victims, witnesses and perpetrators and take witness statements, and gather evidence to ensure the case is dealt with sensitively and confidentially. Support victims and witnesses through effective case management methods in line with policy and procedure.
- Meet with residents' groups and partner agencies to ensure adequate standards of ASB service are being maintained and the service delivery and case strategies remains responsive to the situation and operating environment.
- Identify, risk assess, and report safeguarding concerns to relevant agencies and attend professional meetings to create action plans to support tenancy sustainment.
- Accurately collate and record data and information in-line with General Data Protection Regulations.
- Work digitally and encourage customers to sign up to the customer portal.
- Enforce and support the Rent First and Safety First landlord strategies.
- Customer focussed, to deliver easily accessible, good and safe landlord services. Assessing risk and proportionality when undertaking the key responsibilities of the role.
- Provide advice, support and to signpost customers to ensure they maintain their tenancy in accordance with their tenancy agreement.

Experience and Qualifications

- Educated to GCSE or equivalent standard, including passes in English and Maths.
- CIH or equivalent housing qualification desirable, or significant, demonstrable housing management experience.
- Proven experience of dealing with challenging situations and a broad range of different customer needs
- Knowledge of current housing issues and practice, housing law, regulation, and knowledge of leasehold and shared ownership management
- Working knowledge of confidentiality and GDPR requirements
- Confidently able to use Microsoft Office products including Word, Outlook, Teams and Excel
- Able to prioritise and juggle variable and demanding workloads
- Able to meet targets and deadlines, sometimes under pressure
- Have an innovative and creative approach to problem solving
- Experience of lone working/remote working

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- Strong communication/people skills
- Presents written and verbal communication in a clear, concise manner
- Clear understanding of the importance of customer service
- Flexible and self-motivated in approach
- Excellent team player.
- Work outside normal working hours where required including evenings and weekends to include travelling outside of the region for training and meetings as required.
- Valid UK driving licence and use of a vehicle for work purposes.

Complexity

A portion of the role is routine where a rehearsed solution can be applied. But often the routine elements of the role escalate into something which requires thorough analysis through a range of channels and consultation for a decision to be made. An example of a challenging problem that this role faces is when the need for an emergency move to alternative accommodation is required. The needs of the customer and community need to be met within the remit of Aster as a landlord, their expectations managed, and an investigation performed as to the requirements of the customer and need for the move. A further example is where a repair issue arises on a new build where the property is still within the defect period. A requirement of the role is to often have challenging conversations with customers, colleagues and external agencies. This could be delivering bad news to a customer around an emotive subject. Diversity of tenures necessitates different approaches to achieve solutions and a keen eye of identifying issues and responsibilities.

Impact

The most impactful decisions of this role are selecting and offering a home to a new customer as well as leading on any potential possession proceedings or any legal application for a failing tenancy. Allocations must be in accordance with local authority policies and meet the Section 106 specified criteria. Decisions for possession must be reasonable and proportionate, and information gathered and presented in a format which is accepted by the court. These are high impact decisions that could result in a customer losing their home, large legal costs or reputational damage to the organisation.

The role comes with a responsibility to act with autonomy and freedom to achieve the objectives and strategy of the organisation. Awareness and knowledge of the parameters of the service standards, legislation and regulation is required to perform the role. Identifying, reporting and mitigating risk. To ensure that negative impact on the business and customer is minimised.

Influence

Communicate clearly in writing and verbally with a wide range of customers, colleagues and stakeholders. Work in an organised and methodical manner with attention to detail. Make confident decisions Participate in learning and development activities that develop personal effectiveness and assist in improving performance in the role.

Advocating the interests of the customer to our colleagues and ensuring that we uphold our duties as a landlord and are doing the right thing as solutions are often not prescribed. Being assertive in doing this is sometimes necessary to achieve the right outcome for the customer and the business.

The role requires interaction with a range of stakeholders and partnership agencies, including, but not limited to; Adult Social Care, Mental Health Services, Fire Service Police, Probation, Providers of Legal Aid, Housing Options and the Local Authorities. This interaction can be

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challenging as we often have differing priorities, this role requires good negotiation skills and strong will power to ensure that the objectives of the organisation are met.

Resources Management

Establish, develop and maintain positive open and trusted relationships with local authority departments, the police and other key partners operating in your patch particularly on issues that require a multi-agency approach to resolution.

Required to manage own time and objectives to maximise outputs by ensuring that our databases and records are up to date and accurate. This has an impact on the reputational status of the team and wider organisation.