

Housing Needs Department

Reviews Officer Job Description and Person Specification

03 February 2026

Job Description

Job Title:	Reviews Officer
Department:	Housing Needs
Function:	Communities
Team:	Housing Reviews & Service Improvement Team
Post number:	S000405; S000406; S004192
Grade:	LBR 11
Hours/weeks:	36 hours / 52.14 weeks
Base location:	Lynton House
Reports to: <i>Job title</i>	Reviews & Service Improvement Manager
Responsible for: <i>Job titles of direct reports</i>	No direct line management but may be responsible for the supervision of trainee and work placement employees on occasion
Role purpose and role dimensions: <i>Overview of the job</i>	- To carry out high quality, timely reviews of homelessness decisions (negative homeless decisions, suitability, discharge of duty) under section 202 of the Housing Act 1996; , reviews functions under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017; part VI reviews of Housing register assessment's and housing offers through choice-based lettings - Manage cases that go to section 204 appeal in the County Court and to further appeal in the higher courts: judicial reviews and other housing court challenges - To reduce the need for provision of temporary accommodation and resulting expenditure by ensuring effective and timely reviews but also offering good quality options, prevention and relief advice as part of reviews casework - To take responsibility for the recording of high quality, key data on all types of reviews which support the submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government ensuring key trends on homelessness, the causes and solutions is available. Also ensuring information on homelessness and allocations as it relates to reviews is available for analysis locally to support the management of demand and response to trends - This is a specialist role that will be at the forefront of the new reviews functions following the introduction of the Homelessness Act 2017. - This position is fundamental to the provision of housing advice and homelessness services to vulnerable customers who may approach the council for assistance as a result of the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reductions Act 2017 duties, and other key housing legislation, alongside the Children Act and the Care Act. - This is a specialist role that will be at the forefront of the prevention of homelessness, and at the cutting edge following the introduction of the Homelessness Act 2017. In particular the new review and appeal duties created will require adapting to enable the service to comply with the emerging new regime.

Key external contacts: <i>Organisations</i>	This will involve: • Probation Service • Police • Hospital Professionals/Specialists • Domestic Abuse Professionals • Education Service • Solicitors / Advocates
Key internal contacts: <i>Job titles or groups of staff</i>	• Housing Solution staff • Accommodation and Acquisition Staff • Accommodation Needs Assessment staff • Housing Allocation Staff • Children Services • Adult Social Care Team • Council Medical Advisors • Corporate Complaint
Financial dimensions: <i>Budgetary responsibility & amount. Equipment, cash, property etc. for which employee is responsible.</i>	No Budgetary responsibility
Other considerations: <i>E.g. working patterns</i>	Hybrid working pattern: Monday to Friday, with one required office-based day per week.

Key accountabilities and result areas:	Key elements: • The post holder will be required to have comprehensive knowledge of all housing advice and homelessness legislation, other general housing legislation, welfare benefit expertise and knowledge of the adult & children social care environment and impact and to use this knowledge to support customers and achieve positive outcomes • The post holder will be required to have specialist knowledge of the Housing Act 1996, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Children Act, and the Care Act. Combined with specialist knowledge of the Welfare Reform Act. • The post holder needs to use this knowledge to work collaboratively with customers to resolve their reviews and to identify the most appropriate and effective solutions to their housing problems and to do so proactively at the most appropriate time – ensuring the maximum opportunities for early intervention • The post holder will be required to be innovative, dynamic and solutions focussed and consider and pursue all available housing options to prevent the customers from becoming homeless. • The post holder will be required to use their experience to contribute to the ongoing development and design of the service and solutions for customers.
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1. Strategy and Planning	• The post holder will be required to have comprehensive knowledge of all housing advice and homelessness legislation, other general housing legislation, welfare benefit expertise and knowledge of the adult & children social care environment and impact and to use this knowledge to support customers and achieve positive outcomes • The post holder will be required to have specialist knowledge of the Housing Act 1996, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Children Act, and the Care Act. Combined with specialist knowledge of the Welfare Reform Act. • The post holder needs to use this knowledge to work collaboratively with customers to resolve their reviews and to identify the most appropriate and effective solutions to their housing problems and to do so proactively at the most appropriate time – ensuring the maximum opportunities for early intervention • The post holder will be required to be innovative, dynamic and solutions focussed and consider and pursue all available housing options to prevent the customers from becoming homeless. • The post holder will be required to use their experience to contribute to the ongoing development and design of the service and solutions for customers.
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2. Operations and Support

This will involve:

- Contribute as a member of the Reviews and Service Improvement team.
- Managing all aspects of own casework in association with all reviews carried out, keeping detailed case notes, liaising with the customer and their advocates, and responding to solicitors and other correspondence within target and to a very high standard
- Providing any necessary input on cases that are appealed in the County Court and beyond, preparing witness statements and responses to appeal as required in conjunction other officers and managers, and the Council's Legal Department.
- Taking appropriate decisions on requests for interim accommodation pending review or county court appeal.
- Supporting the response to emergency judicial review applications in a timely and professional way on topics including failure to accommodate pending review, suitability of temporary accommodation offered under s.193, and to work with Legal Services to defend all legal challenges. Respond to pre action protocol letters in cases of threatened Judicial Review proceedings and take appropriate action to ensure the Council complies with its statutory obligations to homeless households.
- Carrying out reviews of suitability of temporary accommodation, private rented sector offers and discharges of the homelessness duty including as a result of refusal of part VI offers.
- Considering full customers vulnerability under either the law on housing, the Care Act 2014, or the Children Act 1989
- Providing appropriate contributions to the development of high-quality Personalised Housing Plans.
- Effectively assess customers support needs, record and act on these, making referrals for resettlement support as required
- Conduct non statutory reviews of allocations scheme decisions under part VI of the Housing Act 1996, including decisions on qualification and level of preference.
- Carrying out high quality and compliant new Homelessness Reduction Act reviews of the prevention, relief and main duty requirements, and accommodation offers.
- Supporting learning from reviews and other casework and assist in improving the consistency of decision making and quality of decisions by raising and working through issues that arise on reviews with Housing Solutions Officers & Team Leaders, Housing Supply Team Leader & Officers, Acquisitions & TA Team Leader and Officers and Suitability Officers.
- Supporting innovation within the service through the application of best practice housing and homelessness solutions as a means of mitigating the negative impact of welfare reforms.
- Working with customers and colleagues to contribute to Personalised Housing Plans for customers on behalf of the council considering the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- Contributing to the development of the reviews service as a member of the team.
- Making recommendations for housing assistance through the bond and incentive scheme and prevention payments where expenditure on and discretionary assistance of this type is appropriate.
- Preparing effective response to Members Enquiries, Complaints, and Ombudsman Enquiries, Freedom of Information Requests as directed.
- Liaise as appropriate with the Housing Supply and Acquisitions team regarding issues arising in review related to customers specific needs, accommodation standards in temporary accommodation and performance by managing agents and private sector landlords.
- Provide an effective, customer-focussed and efficient service to customers presenting with housing problems.
- Prioritise early intervention and create an environment for responding to customers issues as soon as possible
- Contribute as a member of the Reviews and Service Improvement team.
- Managing all aspects of own casework in association with all reviews carried out, keeping detailed case notes, liaising with the customer and their advocates, and responding to solicitors and other correspondence within target and to a very high standard
- Providing any necessary input on cases that are appealed in the County Court and beyond, preparing witness statements and responses to appeal as required in conjunction other officers and managers, and the Council's Legal Department.

- To take appropriate decisions on requests for interim accommodation pending review or county court appeal.
- To support the response to emergency judicial review applications in a timely and professional way on topics including failure to accommodate pending review, suitability of temporary accommodation offered under s.193, and to work with Legal Services to defend all legal challenges. Respond to pre action protocol letters in cases of threatened Judicial Review proceedings and take appropriate action to ensure the Council complies with its statutory obligations to homeless households.
- To carry out reviews of suitability of temporary accommodation, private rented sector offers and discharges of the homelessness duty including as a result of refusal of part VI offers.
- To fully consider customers vulnerability under either the law on housing, the Care Act 2014, or the Children Act 1989
- Provide appropriate contributions to the development of high quality Personalised Housing Plans.
- Effectively assess customers support needs, record and act on these, making referrals for resettlement support as required
- Conduct non statutory reviews of allocations scheme decisions under part VI of the Housing Act 1996, including decisions on qualification and level of preference.
- Carry out high quality and compliant new Homelessness Reduction Act reviews of the prevention, relief and main duty requirements, and accommodation offers.
- Support learning from reviews and other casework and assist in improving the consistency of decision making and quality of decisions by raising and working through issues that arise on reviews with Housing Solutions Officers & Team Leaders, Housing Supply Team Leader & Officers, Acquisitions & TA Team Leader and Officers and Suitability Officers.
- Support innovation within the service through the application of best practice housing and homelessness solutions as a means of mitigating the negative impact of welfare reforms.
- Work with customers and colleagues to contribute to Personalised Housing Plans for customers on behalf of the council in light of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- Contribute to the development of the reviews service as a member of the team.
- Make recommendations for housing assistance through the bond and incentive scheme and prevention payments where expenditure on and discretionary assistance of this type is appropriate.
- Prepare effective response to Members Enquiries, Complaints, and Ombudsman Enquiries, Freedom of Information Requests as directed.
- Liaise as appropriate with the Housing Supply and Acquisitions team regarding issues arising in review related to customers specific needs, accommodation standards in temporary accommodation and performance by managing agents and private sector landlords.
- Provide an effective, customer-focussed and efficient service to customers presenting with housing problems.
- Prioritise early intervention and create an environment for responding to customers issues as soon as possible
- Provide proactive and timely housing advice and options to customers that supports the achievement of positive outcomes for households wherever possible To advise customers on full range of options to solve their housing problem, including
- To refer customers for specialist information as necessary – on landlord and tenant issues, mobility options, resettlement and rough sleeping
- To professionally and effectively interview customers and carry out rigorous investigations
- To carry out robust, good quality casework on the customers case – collating and analysing information, reconsidering initial officers interpretation of the case and considering specialist advice and opinion
- To use relevant identity/credit software and other tools that enables the service to check and verify applications and the circumstances affecting the service user.
- To write and issue statutory S202 decision letters, minded to decisions and other relevant decision letters
- To request the provision of temporary accommodation and private sector support where necessary

	• To deal with all review related correspondence e.g. from solicitors, councillors, voluntary sector agencies, and applicants. • To make recommendations for service area improvement and feedback concerns and trends from reviews, and prepare reports for senior management as required. • To work jointly with all relevant teams within the Housing service and other Council departments including Housing Standards Team ,Children's services, Tenancy Sustainment Team, and Legal Services. • Comply with all relevant statutory requirements, Government Guidance and Codes, Redbridge policies and procedures, professional and performance standards and best housing and homelessness prevention practice. • Ensure the accurate recording of all customers and all advice and support provided and to ensure this is actively updated as situations change. To maintain accurate written and computer records, reports, & other monitoring information as required in connection with the various duties undertaken, and keep other records necessary to provide an adequate management information data base and electronic file • To advise clients of available tenancy support services including floating support, income maximisation, debt and rent arrears advice, Discretionary Housing Payments, Housing Benefit support, mobility mutual exchange and under-occupation schemes • Any other duties appropriate to the post and grade.
3. Systems and Process Development and Improvement	• Utilising the homelessness system to update reviews information on cases and contribute to produce personal housing plans and to provide key monitoring information for submission to the HCLic system created by DCLG and for local information reporting and management • Maintaining customers electronic files on info@work providing a thorough audit trail of activity and key documents in line with agreed process • Complying with all monitoring systems put in place in response to service issues and needs which support the provision of a high quality, legally compliant service • To contribute to learning opportunities, training and service improvement exercises across Housing Needs related to learning and new requirements on reviews. • Contributing to the development design and implementation of new policies and processes within reviews and more broadly in Housing Needs as appropriate.
	• Developing effective working relationships with colleagues within Redbridge, other council and statutory services, advocates and solicitors, external bodies, service users, landlords as well as voluntary and other housing organisations and ensure effective referrals. • Working with Redbridge Legal Services. Attend the High Court, Appeal Court and County Court with Legal Services on relevant cases • Producing supporting information and briefing reports for Legal Services to offer guidance and assistance with Court cases affecting the Service as required. • Working professionally with service users, their representatives and other agencies involved with Reviews and Appeals. • Working effectively and efficiently with colleagues within the service, across other departments and external agencies to deliver an excellent customer focused service, meeting set targets and KPI's. • Attending meetings of relevant partnership boards and agencies and represent the team and/or service as required. • Understanding the value of information to the council and to contribute to good information governance by keeping information safe, accurate and up to date and available to those who need it. Officers are required to abide by the council's information governance policies. • Ensuring the provision of advice and review services to customers through personal or telephone interviews, correspondence, advocacy, reception, home visiting, outreach work and surgeries, workshops and talks to customer groups.

4. Communication Partnership

This will involve:

- Developing effective working relationships with colleagues within Redbridge, other council and statutory services, advocates and solicitors, external bodies, service users, landlords as well as voluntary and other housing organisations and ensure effective referrals.
- Working with Redbridge Legal Services. Attend the High Court, Appeal Court and County Court with Legal Services on relevant cases
- Producing supporting information and briefing reports for Legal Services to offer guidance and assistance with Court cases affecting the Service as required.
- Working professionally with service users, their representatives and other agencies involved with Reviews and Appeals.
- Working effectively and efficiently with colleagues within the service, across other departments and external agencies to deliver an excellent customer focused service, meeting set targets and KPI's.
- Attending meetings of relevant partnership boards and agencies and represent the team and/or service as required.
- Understanding the value of information to the council and to contribute to good information governance by keeping information safe, accurate and up to date and available to those who need it. Officers are required to abide by the council's information governance policies.
- Ensuring the provision of advice and review services to customers through personal or telephone interviews, correspondence, advocacy, reception, home visiting, outreach work and surgeries, workshops and talks to customer groups.
- Responding to enquiries, complaints, freedom of information requests and correspondence from clients and their advocates, including solicitors, councillors, MPs, the ombudsman and other housing providers, in line with the Council's complaints and enquiries procedures.
- Prepare information as required to support court cases (reviews and appeals, judicial reviews etc.).
- Liaise with customers, statutory organisations, advocates and third sector providers to arrive at a sustainable housing solution for customers with complex and multiple needs for example mental health combined with drug and or alcohol addiction.
- Internal Contacts: Staff in Housing
- External Contacts: Members, MPs, Solicitors, Advocates, Advice Agencies, People Directorate, Health, Redbridge Enforcement, Youth Offending Team, Police, Probation Service, private sector landlords, Hostels and Bed & Breakfasts, third sector providers, service users, their friends, relatives and advisors. To assist in developing full range of information and publicity for all clients as well as supporting the development of internal procedures.
- The officer is required to take reasonable care for the safety and health of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts; and to work with management to comply with Service/Unit procedures and protocols and with Redbridge Council's Health and Safety Policy and all guidance, instructions and risk assessments. In particular the officer is required to attend training relevant to their post in order to ensure their health and safety responsibilities are met.

5. Performance and Standards	This will involve: • Ensuring the service carries out independent reviews of homeless decisions, suitability of offers of temporary accommodation and private sector offers to discharge duty, part VI offers of accommodation and part VI assessment reviews in a timely manner. Ensure the process minimises costs including expenditure on temporary accommodation and supports the efficient management of the service. • Contributing to the achievement of Housing and Housing Needs service plan priorities and objectives and meet key targets. • Recognising the critical impact of homelessness on customers, and delivering early, accurate and high quality advice • Responsibility for accurate record keeping and use of systems to ensure comprehensive ability to report on customers individual service provision and overall homeless trends • Ensuring that casework is proactively managed and key deadlines - for the provision of actions on customers individual reviews, as well as key process deadlines on casework management are adhered to • Answering members enquiries and draft responses to complaints / enquiries on individual cases as required. • providing statistical information on performance as requested. To ensure the council's policy, in respect of the Homelessness Strategy, TA Placement and Housing Allocations Scheme is carried out.
General accountabilities and responsibilities	
Green Statement	This will involve: ▪ Seeking opportunities for contributing to sustainable development of the borough, in accordance with the Council's commitment to making Redbridge a cleaner, greener place to live. In particular, demonstrating good environmental practice (such as energy efficiency, use of sustainable materials, sustainable transport, recycling and waste reduction) in your job.
Data Protection/Confidentiality	This will involve: ▪ Complying with the Data Protection Act 1998 – treating all information acquired through your employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence and in accordance with Caldicott principles. ▪ Complying with the Code of Conduct, other practice guidelines and the rules and protocols defining employees' access to and use of the Council's databases and systems. Any breaches could result in disciplinary measures. ▪ Maintaining client records and archive systems in accordance with departmental procedure, policy and statutory requirements.
Conduct and Whistleblowing	This will involve: ▪ Complying with the requirements of the Code of Conduct and maintaining high standards of personal conduct, honesty and integrity. You have a duty to raise any impropriety or breach of procedure to the appropriate level of management. Employees making such disclosures (whistleblowing) are protected and may make them without fear of recrimination.
Safer Working	This will involve: ▪ Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Where you work in such a post the Council will require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and references will be taken up prior to interview.

Equalities	This will involve: Complying with the Council's strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity and outcomes in its services to the community and in the employment of people. You are expected to understand, comply with and promote Council policies in your work, to undertake any appropriate training and to challenge any prejudice and discrimination.
Customer Care	This will involve: Complying with corporate and service area customer service standards and promoting the development of high quality, individualised and customer-led services.
Health and Safety	This will involve: Being responsible for your own Health & Safety, as well as that of colleagues, service users and the public. Employees should co-operate with management, follow established systems of work, use protective equipment where necessary and report defectives and hazards to management.
To contribute as an effective and collaborative member of the team	This will involve: - Taking responsibility for continuing self-development and participating in training and development activities. - Participating in the ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of the service plans. - Supporting and contributing to value for money, service efficiencies and improvements.
Flexibility	This will involve: The above-mentioned duties are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. From time to time, you may be required to undertake responsibilities outside the normal remit of your Job Description as required by the line manager, and are broadly within your the grading level and competence.

Person Specification

Job Title:	Reviews Officer		
<i>Method of candidate assessment: A = Application form I = Interview T = Test. Weighting: 3 = Essential, 2 = Desirable</i>		A - I - T	Weighting
Minimum education/ qualifications:	Educated to degree level or able to demonstrate equivalent, relevant professional experience in housing, homelessness, welfare, social care, or a related field. Law Graduate are advantageous. Level 4: Specialist learning with ability to undertake detailed analysis of a high level of information and knowledge in an area of work or study. May be evidenced by: Certificates of higher education; NVQ level 4; HND; BTEC Professional; and equivalent qualifications, or evidence of demonstrable application in the course of experience	A - I	3

Minimum experience/ knowledge/ skills:	Specialist knowledge of the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, s.202 review processes, Children Act, Care Act, and the Welfare Reform Act.	A - I – T	3
	Experience working within housing, homelessness, or a similar statutory service, including managing complex casework, producing formal decisions, and applying legislation, guidance, and policy.	A - I – T	3
	Strong understanding of safeguarding and confidentiality, with the ability to apply this knowledge to support customers and achieve positive outcomes.	A - I	3
	Excellent analytical skills, sound decision-making, clear and concise written communication, and the ability to manage a high caseload and meet statutory deadlines.	A - I – T	3
	Proficient IT skills, including effective use of case management systems.	A - I – T	2
Minimum competencies: Customer focus	Must have strong working knowledge of housing advice and homelessness legislation, wider housing law, welfare benefits, and the adult and children’s social care framework, and apply this effectively to support customers and achieve positive outcomes.	A - I – T	3
	Must hold specialist knowledge of the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Children Act, Care Act, and Welfare Reform Act, and use this legislation accurately in casework.	A - I – T	3
	Must work collaboratively with customers to resolve reviews, identifying effective housing solutions and taking proactive early-intervention steps.	A - I	3
	Must demonstrate an innovative, solutions-focused approach, exploring all available housing options to prevent homelessness.	A - I	2
	Must use professional experience to contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of the service.	A - I	3

Communicating and influencing	Commitment to high-quality, customer-centred service delivery, especially when working with vulnerable households.	A - I	3
	Resilience and professionalism when managing legal challenges, adversarial correspondence and high-pressure caseloads.	A - I – T	3
	Attention to detail and accuracy in decision-making, record keeping and data reporting.	A - I – T	3
	Ability to work independently while contributing to wider service improvements, including adapting to new legislative duties and review processes.	A - I	2
Building relationships, working together and in partnership	Builds positive and respectful relationships with colleagues, partners, and customers. Actively contributes to partnership working by sharing information, supporting others, and maintaining trust.	A - I	3
	Works collaboratively to achieve shared goals and deliver effective outcomes. Communicates clearly and openly, encouraging cooperation and joint problem solving.	A - I	3
	Understand and value different perspectives and works constructively across teams and services.	A - I	3
Planning, organising & achieving results	The postholder must be able to plan and prioritise a varied and demanding workload to meet statutory deadlines and service standards.	A - I	3
	Must demonstrate strong organisational skills, managing multiple cases at different stages while maintaining accurate records.	A - I	3
	Should be able to assess urgency, act proactively to gather required information, and adapt plans as issues arise.	A - I	3
	Able to adapt a consistent, systematic approach and a focus on delivering timely, high-quality outcomes, including early intervention to prevent delays is essential.	A - I	3
Embracing change	The post holder must be adaptable, respond positively to change, and adjust their working practices as needed. They should quickly learn new processes and contribute to improving ways of working.	I	3

Managing and developing people	The post holder must support and develop colleagues by sharing knowledge, offering constructive feedback, and helping to build skills and confidence. They should contribute to a positive team culture and encourage continuous improvement.	1	3
Special conditions:	To work outside normal working hours to respond to emergencies or attend meetings	1	3