

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>POST TITLE:</b>	<b>Freedom Housing - Support Worker</b>						
<b>POST NO:</b>	FH012	<b>SERVICE UNIT:</b>	Freedom Housing				
<b>HOURS:</b>	37.5 Hours a week	<b>HOLIDAYS:</b>	33 days (25 + 8 Public Holidays)				
<b>SALARY:</b>	Range £18,500-£22,500 (Depending on skills & experience)	<b>CONTRACT</b>	Permanent				
<b>JOB PURPOSE:</b>							
<p>Freedom Community Alliance (FCA) is a charity based in North Devon. As part of its work FCA manages a number of residential properties in Barnstaple that provide a range of Supported Accommodation Bed Spaces for homeless people referred from the Northern Devon Housing Hub.</p> <p>The Freedom Housing Support Worker role will manage a caseload of clients who are accommodated across a number of these properties. The role will involve working as part of a small team of committed and dedicated workers including Support Workers, Maintenance Team and Cleaners all of whom work together to ensure the residents are well supported and properties are safe and well maintained. The aim of our work is to support residents, helping them to achieve planed goals and objectives and ultimately help facilitate their journey to independent living.</p> <p>The main purposes of the role are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To interview and assess potential residents, confirming their suitability for accommodation in a Freedom Housing property and making recommendations on a case by case basis.</li> <li>• To provide personal support to clients; oversight of the properties, liaison with management and support services.</li> <li>• To liaise with external agencies and partner organisations accessing additional specialist support or services for residents as appropriate on a case by case basis</li> <li>• To work with residents in their development and achievement of individual / person centred support / progression plans working towards the goal of independent living.</li> <li>• To work with clients in a way that helps reduce their drug / alcohol use and their offending behaviour; improve their mental health and overall wellbeing.</li> <li>• To keep up to date accurate records of all support sessions and record progression data on FCA client databases including the 'Outcome Star'.</li> <li>• To manage the process of residents leaving and entering the property ensuring that rooms are available for occupation minimising any period of voids.</li> <li>• To ensure that rents are paid promptly on time and that top up are collected or paid direct to Freedom.</li> <li>• To manage the intake of new residents in such a way that Housing Benefit claims are submitted promptly to avoid any loss of income to the charity.</li> <li>• To adopt a person centered and trauma informed approach to the way you support clients.</li> <li>• To maintain a consistent presence within the houses, quickly identifying potential problems before they arise and coming up with appropriate solutions to maintain peace and harmony.</li> <li>• To help maintain good relationships and discipline within the houses through the chairing of house meetings</li> <li>• To implement the escalation process of discipline with residents where necessary which may include eviction</li> <li>• To attend and contribute to meetings as deemed appropriate</li> </ul>							
<b>POSITION IN ORGANISATION:</b>							
<b>Number Directly Supervised:    Staff: 0    Manual: 0</b>							
<b>Immediate Superior (post title): Senior Manager – Responsible for Housing and Homelessness Services</b>							
<b>POST CLASSIFICATION (tick one box):</b>							
<b>Director in Charge</b>	<b>Exec. Director</b>	<b>Head Major Division</b>	<b>Senior Managem't</b>	<b>Middle Managem't</b>	<b>Junior Managem't</b>	<b>Supervising Small Section</b>	<b>No Supervisory Responsibility</b>
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**MAIN DUTIES (briefly summarise principal duties. Do not list every task):**

- To provide a professional and specialist support role to residents, many of whom will come from a background of homelessness, rough sleeping, addiction and poor mental health.
- To assist in all aspects of a residents settlement into their accommodation.
- To ensure that rooms are ready for people to move into and provide a warm welcome on their arrival.
- To assist and support in all benefits related matters including:-
  1. Claims for housing benefit
  2. Claims for additional benefits subject to eligibility
  3. Health assessments
  4. Universal Credit applications
- To attend appointments with clients as appropriate acting in an advocacy capacity.
- To engage with external professionals to fully understand the specific support needs of each resident and engage external support for residents as appropriate.
- To facilitate and occasionally chair any multi-agency meetings as deemed necessary on a case by case basis.
- To undertake appropriate risk assessments and ensure safeguarding standards are maintained.
- To provide a range of effective and high quality support services.
- To liaise with other project staff and ensure that appropriate clients are given the opportunity to engage in other activities of the charity including:- meaningful activity such as volunteering or work experience, group sessions that might be offered from time to time, and day centre services.
- To maintain a regular presence in the relevant properties ensuring that standards of cleanliness are being maintained.
- To undertake or assist with routine and random room checks.
- To undertake weekly fire alarm tests and record evidence in log books.
- Establish and maintain strong, effective relationships with professionals from a range of statutory and third sector organisations, communicating and liaising effectively.
- Identify and share good practice internally and externally.
- Maintain effective and professional working relationships with all services and to attend to any training or development needs.
- To oversee the collection of rent ensuring that residents do not fall into arrears, liaising with the Housing Admin team as necessary.
- To embrace and support a recovery focussed agenda.
- To take action if and when a resident needs to be evicted from a property.
- To record details of client interaction on appropriate software solutions such as 'Inform', 'Outcome Star' as is used by the charity.

**SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE:**

The postholder will:-

- Have a good general or relevant education beyond GCSE and be able to demonstrate a commitment to self development.
- Have the confidence and ability to carry out work without supervision and be resilient to the challenges of the role.
- Have excellent decision-making, problem solving and analytical ability.
- Have experience of working with homeless, vulnerable and disadvantaged clients.
- Have experience of supporting residents with complex needs in a residential setting.
- Posses excellent inter-personal skills with the ability to relate well to clients and remain calm under pressure.
- Possess excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Have the ability to demonstrate and maintain a -judgemental attitude at all times.
- Be able to demonstrate good prioritisation skills.
- Be pro-active and customer-focused.
- Have the ability to be assertive whilst remaining compassionate, fair and focussed.
- Be a team-player and diplomatic.
- Possess PC skills in Microsoft Office.
- Have a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of other statutory agencies who are involved in supporting our clients.

**Freedom Community Alliance is a Christian Charity and the job holder will need to demonstrate an open and accepting attitude towards the Christian ethos of the Charity.**

## **PROBLEM SOLVING, COMPLEXITY AND USE OF INITIATIVE:**

Typical problems/issues:-

- Dealing with clients who have a background of addiction, manipulative behaviour, repeated homelessness, offending behaviour, broken relationships, poor mental health and poor decision making.
- The post holder is required to work under their own initiative to support residents, and as part of a wider team consisting of FCA staff and partner agencies. It is possible that this role will be the first to become aware of any potential problems that may affect a residents accommodation or the safety of other residents. There may be times when tough decisions need to be made and communicated to residents. E.g. Terminate a person's accommodation or arrange a move to an alternative property. The post holder will be expected to have the necessary resilience to handle these difficult situations in a calm and professional manner.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT:**

**The successful candidate will be working for Freedom Community Alliance as part of the Freedom Housing Support Team. The postholder will have a desk at the Freedom Centre but will spend a lot of their time with residents either within their accommodation, in the community or at Freedom. The role will require working across various sites in Barnstaple, therefore possession of a full and valid drivers licence and access to a car is essential.**

- The emotional demands on this post may at times be challenging, as the job holder will be working with people who have suffered past abuse and trauma. Some are likely to display challenging / manipulative and sometimes destructive behaviours and in these circumstances the need to remain calm, clear headed and solution focussed will be important.
- There may be exposure to medium levels of health and safety risk, associated with working with individuals with complex needs in a variety of locations. Some levels of aggression might be experienced.
- Whilst the role has been deemed suitable for lone working in most cases, support, when needed, may be provided by your co-worker, other FCA staff or from the wider rough sleeper outreach team.
- Supporting residents in housing should not be considered as a purely 9am to 5pm role as occasionally support is required outside of these hours and therefore the need for flexibility is important. Although weekends and evenings are not a regular or normal part of this role occasional weekend or evening work might be required at short notice. In situations where work is undertaken outside of 9am to 5pm, Time off in lieu (TOIL) will be granted. The ability to be flexible is an important aspect of this role. Residents may need to contact you during evenings or weekends but this should be discouraged so that only essential calls are made out of hours.
- There may be a need to introduce an 'on call' system and although not in place at present this role would be required to be a part of such a system if it was introduced at a later date.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

<b>BUSINESS UNIT:</b> Freedom Housing	<b>POST TITLE:</b> Housing Support Worker
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THE EMPLOYEE	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<b>HEALTH &amp; PHYSICAL MAKE UP:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good standard of general health</li> </ul>	
<b>EDUCATION &amp; TRAINING:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good general or technical education beyond GCSE level</li> </ul>	
<b>WORKS EXPERIENCE &amp; SKILLS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have some relevant experience working with a voluntary sector organisation; clients with complex needs and local agencies involved in housing solutions</li> <li>• Experience of providing a front line customer service</li> <li>• Knowledge of legislative framework and best practice surrounding Homelessness, Prevention and Allocations</li> <li>• Experience of assessing clients needs</li> <li>• Good understanding of roles and responsibilities of all agencies involved in housing solutions and rehabilitation</li> <li>• Knowledge of welfare benefits systems</li> <li>• Experience of IT Office Systems</li> <li>• Experience of excellent team working</li> <li>• Experience of working successfully in a Performance management culture</li> <li>• Experience of working effectively with a multitude of external agencies</li> <li>• Excellent verbal and written communication skills</li> <li>• Excellent inter-personal skills</li> <li>• Ability to work with minimum supervision</li> <li>• Ability to prioritise workloads</li> <li>• An experienced decision-maker</li> <li>• Experience of analysing and problem solving</li> <li>• Experience of innovative/non –prescribed ideas and solutions</li> <li>• Organised and methodical</li> <li>• Experience of the use of persuasion and motivation skills</li> <li>• Able to remain calm, objective and focussed under pressure</li> </ul>	
<b>CHARACTER:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendly, approachable and empathic</li> <li>• Non-judgemental</li> <li>• Honest and highly motivated</li> <li>• Driven to constantly learn and improve</li> <li>• Have an inquisitive, innovative and dynamic approach</li> <li>• Able to embrace change</li> <li>• Organised and able to work to deadlines</li> <li>• Confident to work alone</li> <li>• Excellent communicator</li> <li>• Be tactful but assertive</li> <li>• Be able to remain calm</li> <li>• Be able to deal with emotional demands</li> </ul>	
<b>CIRCUMSTANCES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a full and valid driving licence and access to a car</li> <li>• Able to work hours required with a degree of flexibility</li> </ul>	