

Job Description

Job title:	Housing Support Worker
Reports to:	Housing Support Manager
Based at:	Middleport, Stoke-on-Trent and other local offices
Hours of work:	36 hours per week
Salary:	£26,708 gross per annum (Pro rata to £25,986 gross per annum)

Job Summary

North Staffs and Cheshire Mind provides supported accommodation for people who experience mental ill health and who require a level of support to enable them to maintain a tenancy and progress towards a more independent lifestyle. The team also provide floating support to people who are living in their own homes, but who have additional needs due to their mental ill health.

We are proud to be part of a service dedicated to the prevention and reduction of homelessness in our city. Led by Concrete and alongside Adullam and Walk Ministries we are delivering a 24/7 support service that helps our service users not just survive but thrive in their homes through a bespoke, seamless, long-term recovery solution to tackle the underlying issues of homelessness.

A pro-active approach in supporting a service user to maintain a successful tenancy is key to the success of the team and no two days are the same in supported housing. The post holder will be expected to respond to the unpredictable behaviours and consequences of some complex mental health diagnoses and their associated medications.

Whilst the Housing office is based in Middleport, team members are encouraged to make use of all office locations and on occasion may work from home if it supports the needs of our customers. There is a requirement to travel to various locations throughout Stoke-on-Trent to carry out home visits and facilitate appointments and meetings.

Duties and responsibilities will include:

General Support

- Participate in assessing the needs of service users (residents and floating support) to enable the development of a support plan, identifying and monitoring goals and progress.

- Deliver a quality support package, tailored to the individual service user, ensuring their own ideas are considered.
- In line with the support plan, ensure service users are engaged in meaningful activities and relevant appointments and/or support to achieve their goals, work towards the best possible outcome for the individual and facilitate continuous progression.
- Complete the sign-up process with new residents and those moving internally, which forms a fundamental start to a service user's journey.
- Representation of both the service user and the organisation at hospital meetings, PIP tribunals, DWP appointments etc. as appropriate, assisted by the Housing Support Manager where necessary.
- Respond to and deal with service users' grievances and disputes.
- Assist service users in securing other services and benefits to which they are entitled and signpost where necessary.
- Actively listen to service users, taking account of, and respecting their own views
- Establish and facilitate links and professional relationships with all relevant services and informal carers involved with the service user, ensuring compliance with confidentiality and GDPR procedures.
- Comprehensive overview of the service users in your caseload to include ensuring priority debts are being paid, identification of benefit entitlement and support with claiming/responding to requests from Housing Benefit/Universal credit etc.
- Proactive monitoring of rent accounts and benefit claims. Early interventions to address debt and suspended/cancelled claims and signposting to other agencies where appropriate.
- Research and utilise other local services that may be of benefit to the service users, and encourage their engagement, sharing information across the team.

Tenancy Support

- Identify and report any breaches of tenancy, including the preparation of documentation in line with policies and procedures, to be forwarded to the Housing and Compliance Coordinator for approval and distribution.
- Pro-active management of payment of rent from residents and associated charges in line with internal policies and procedures and associated external protocols.
- Identify issues and monitor the condition of properties and the fixtures, fittings and equipment within them to facilitate repair or replacement, that items are recharged correctly and to mitigate risk.

Health & Safety

- Participate in assessing risks faced by service users and assist in identifying ways to mitigate those risks.
- Report any criminal/suspected criminal behaviour to the Housing Support Manager immediately.
- Carry out regular health and safety checks in our owned and managed properties in order to remain compliant with legislation and lease and management agreements.
- Participate in regular property visits and constantly monitor health and safety, responding and reporting as appropriate, to comply with contractual agreements and policies and procedures.

Administration

- Manage your own diary and prioritise your workload whilst retaining a flexible approach to accommodate service cover, appointments and other team commitments.
- Accurately record information to compliment support plans, policy and process relating to service users using a CRM and housing management system.
- Prompt reporting of collecting, recording and keeping secure any rent and other money received, in accordance with the policies and procedures of North Staffs and Cheshire Mind.

General

- Contribute to the out-of-hours on-call support for residents on a rota basis.
- Comply with the policies and procedures of North Staffs and Cheshire Mind, including those specific to the housing service.
- Utilise different channels of communication, such as Teams, email, messaging to facilitate good communication throughout the team.
- Contribute to regular team meetings and attend line management, case review meetings and supervision.
- Take responsibility for seeking relevant support as appropriate to your role, reporting any concerns to your line manager.
- Undertake relevant and appropriate training as instructed by North Staffs and Cheshire Mind, including Saturday CPD workshops.
- Provide cover for colleagues' absences as required.
- Carry out other relevant and appropriate duties as requested by a line manager.

The postholder must hold a full UK driving licence and have use of their own vehicle for business purposes.

The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced DBS check prior to employment.

This job description is an outline of the main duties and responsibilities only and may be subject to development and refinement in negotiation with the post holder.

Terms and conditions

- You are required to provide a car for use at work, and to insure it appropriately, at your own expense.
- You will receive mileage allowances, in line with Inland Revenue regulations.
- You are required to be available "on call", by way of a pager system, based on a rota system
- You will receive an "on-call" allowance of £120 for each full week that you are on call.
- You will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses that are authorised in accordance with North Staffs and Cheshire Mind's procedures.
- You will receive 5 weeks paid holiday per year (pro rata), plus your birthday as extra annual leave.
- Working Christmas period, on a rota basis.

Person Specification

ESSENTIAL

- Commitment to the values of North Staffs and Cheshire Mind, the principles and practice of Equal Opportunities, and service user empowerment/independence.
- Good listening skills and an ability and willingness to form supportive and appropriate relationships with tenants and floating support service users.
- An understanding and/or experience of working with people who have moderate to severe mental health needs.
- An understanding and/or experience of working in a supported housing environment or floating support capacity.
- Confident in using IT based systems and knowledge of Microsoft Office and Outlook.
- The ability to work on your own initiative whilst also working effectively as part of a small team
- Good time management skills and the ability to prioritise your workload.
- Energy, enthusiasm and flexibility.
- A full UK driving licence and use of an appropriately insured car.

DESIRABLE

- An understanding of mental health services.
- An understanding and/or experience of working with welfare benefits.
- An understanding and/or experience of working with substance abuse issues.
- General practical skills related to housing management and maintenance.
- Experience of working in a similar setting
- An understanding of income and debt management
- A working knowledge of housing legislation