JOB DESCRIPTION

Title of Job:	Housing Officer
Location:	Hybrid working between Inverness/Invergordon and Home
Number of Jobholders:	17
Title of Line Manager:	Senior Housing Officer
Responsible for:	n/a

Purpose and Scope

To deliver high quality customer services to an allocated caseload that will ensure the organisations aims, objectives and performance standards are met or exceeded in accordance with all relevant legislation, policies, procedures, and best practice guidance, and within available budget parameters. You will be required to operate in a function-based specialism but have excellent general all round housing management capabilities.

Job Outline: Responsibilities and Tasks

MAJOR TASKS

- Deliver effective housing management services relating to Allocations, Voids, Tenancy Sustainment, Anti-Social Behaviour, Estate Management, and Income Management
- Provide information and advice to customers on relevant aspects of policy, legislation, and their tenancy obligations.
- Engage with customers to develop and deliver local services in accordance with Scottish Social Housing Charter requirements.
- Investigate and respond to customer contacts, including complaints, in line with the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO) complaints process and internal guidance.
- Help to develop and maintain effective internal and external working relationships.
- Assist in the development of and apply relevant policies, procedures, and good practice.
- Carry out all duties in line with Albyn's values and policies.
- Carry out any other duties to the standards set as may reasonably be required by the business needs of the Society.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

- **Deliver effective housing management services (*as applicable to the specialist function you are currently operating in)***

    - *Voids and Allocations*
        - Process tenancy terminations, including surveying the extent of any damage caused by tenants and costs to be recharged to the tenant.
        - Assess and prioritise the relative needs of housing applicants and maximise customers' housing options through advice and access to the Highland Housing Register (HHR) and all other relevant options.
        - Liaise with colleagues and relevant professionals to support customers with any medical adaptation needs.
        - Liaise with colleagues to manage new development handovers and ensure prompt occupation by tenants.
        - Allocate properties to appropriate applicants on the housing list in compliance with internal and external procedures and regulation, ensuring that all applicants are treated fairly and that void periods and rent losses are kept to a minimum.
        - Liaise with the local authority to receive and deal with referrals for homeless applicants.
        - Follow Albyn's processes to complete successful tenancy sign-up, including signposting and referral for any support to help the tenant sustain their tenancy.

    - *Tenancy Sustainment*
        - Receive and take responsibility for allocated tenancy sustainment referrals.
        - Assess tenant needs and agree support to be provided with the Senior Housing Officer, including support delivered directly by Albyn and support required from external agencies.
        - Deliver agreed support and work with external partners to arrange and secure delivery of external support.
        - Maintain accurate records of interactions with customers and outcomes in Albyn's housing management systems.
        - Support delivery of Albyn's Fit Homes project, including assessing customer needs, allocations to Fit Homes and working with Albyn's Innovation Team to provide an effective Fit Homes service.
        - Identify needs and provide evidence to support development of funding bids and other internally or externally funded tenancy sustainment initiatives.

    - *Income Management*
        - Monitor, control and progress actions for the prevention or recovery of current and former tenancy rent arrears or other tenancy related debts.
        - Produce and monitor regular caseload arrears reports.

- Take proactive responsibility for the prompt collection or rent and related charges across a designated caseload, to ensure maximum collection of our main source of business income.
- Ensure timely and proactive management and early interventions in line with legislative Pre-Action Requirements (PARs).
- Negotiate and agree affordable and appropriate repayment arrangements to ensure the collection of tenancy related debts.
- Liaise with the local authority or relevant government departments on entitlement of benefits or other assistance with housing related costs.
- Understand and apply the legal processes for non-payment of tenancy related charges, prepare cases summaries and paperwork and instruct appropriate legal actions to be raised by our solicitor as required.
- Attend court hearings and supply evidence and witness statements where required.
- Attend eviction enforcements to ensure security of the property and take possession.

- *Tenancy, Anti-Social Behaviour and Estate Management*
  - Manage and agree outcomes on all requests for assignations, successions, lodgers, sub-lets, household changes or any other tenancy dealings within required legislative timescales.
  - Obtain and provide tenancy references with other landlords.
  - Investigate reports of breach of tenancy, in liaison with customers, community representatives and partner agencies as required.
  - Recognise & respond to sensitive or emergency situations relating to tenancy management issues.
  - Negotiate and agree appropriate remedial actions with customers; and identify and implement appropriate actions for unresolved breaches of tenancy obligations.
  - Understand the legal processes and remedies of breaches of tenancy, prepare case summaries and paperwork and instruct appropriate legal actions to be raised by our solicitor.
  - Attend court hearings and supply evidence and witness statements where required.
  - Attend evictions and abandonment enforcements to ensure security of the property, take inventories and arrange storage of furniture and possessions.
  - Regularly inspect estates and neighbourhoods to ensure that areas are free from hazards and that tenancy obligations are being met by tenants and landlord, taking appropriate action where required.

- **Help to develop and maintain effective internal and external working relationships.**

- Liaise with external agencies to develop successful tenancies and sustainable communities including participation in relevant working groups and partnership meetings.
- Organise, attend and, when required, chair multi-agency meetings to enable effective partnership management of complex, high community risk or sensitive cases as required.
- Practice excellent communication skills and apply a professional approach and behaviour to ensure the needs of colleagues and customers are responded to appropriately.

- **Provide information and advice to customers on relevant aspects of policy, legislation, and their tenancy obligations.**
  - Develop knowledge and understanding of Scottish social housing and homelessness legislation, and relevant local and national housing policy, to be able to advise customers.
  - Understand and identify vulnerabilities that may cause difficulties and refer cases to tenancy sustainment or specialist agencies for support and assistance as required.
  - Identify cases that require multi-agency input, and organise, chair, administer and participate in multi-agency case review meetings as required.

- **Investigate and respond to customer complaints in line with the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO) complaints process and internal guidance.**
  - Investigate and respond to complaints from customers, elected members, or other customer representatives.
  - Provide information to colleagues and managers to assist them with their own investigations and responses as required.

- **Assist in the development of and apply relevant policies, procedures, and good practice.**
  - Keep up to date with legislative, policy, professional and health and safety issues relevant to operational duties and ensure completion of minimum CPD requirements to maintain any professional accreditations.
  - Assist the Senior Housing Officer/Customer Services Manager to examine existing policy, work practices and systems with a view to continuous improvement.
  - Deliver coaching, training, and support to colleagues to ensure that duties are carried out competently across the team and successful delivery of customer service excellence.

- **Engage with customers to develop and deliver local services in accordance with Scottish Social Housing Charter requirements.**

- Participate in resident or other community group meetings, including consulting with customers and reporting back on aspects of service delivery.
- Proactively work with residents and partner organisations to support community cohesion and neighbourhood improvements within policy and budget parameters.

- **Carry out other duties to the standards set as may reasonably be required by the business needs of the Society.**

  - **General**
    - Apply sound knowledge and operational use of appropriate IT systems (including CX and HHR databases, Microsoft Office and other specialist software packages as applicable and required).
    - Monitor performance against targets and provide prompt and accurate information required to meet performance reporting requirements.
    - Be available for out of hours or emergency calls on an occasional basis and instruct call-centre staff in relation to out of hours emergency repairs as required.
    - Provide cover within your specialism and others during periods of absence.
    - Be aware of and adhere to Albyn Group policies at all times.
    - Apply proper regard for data protection issues for the accurate recording and use of sensitive customer and employee information.
    - Take part in progress/performance reviews throughout the year and actively work towards achievement of agreed objectives and targets.
    - Cooperate with other Albyn Group departments.
    - Attend training courses and complete online training modules as required to meet the requirements of the post.
    - Take responsibility for own personal development, seeking out opportunities to learn new skills.
    - Undertake any other duties as requested by management which are reasonably deemed to be within the scope of the role.

  - **Health & Safety**
    - Comply with safe working practices as defined by Albyn Group
    - Complete online training as and when required.
    - Take reasonable care for your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by acts or omissions at work.

  - **Other**
    - The successful applicant will be required to be placed on a rota with other Housing and Technical Officers to provide dire emergency out of hours cover. This will involve providing advice and assisting the appointed call-centre with more complicated out of hours

emergency repair calls and arranging alternative temporary accommodation for tenants when this is required. The on-call duties are for one week and will involve being on duty for one week out of every 20.

- Apply the Albyn Group values and behaviours to every aspect of the role at all times.
- Promote and maintain the standards of Albyn Group.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential: Education & Training	• Achieved or actively working to gain a Housing HNC or equivalent qualification. • Educated to at least 'Higher' grade. • Demonstrate effective reflection on practice and willingness to undertake continuous learning and professional development.
Essential: Skills and Abilities	• Plan, prioritise and manage their time and workload to exceed targets and meet deadlines. • Work unsupervised and make decisions independently, taking responsibility for the decision made, appropriate to the level of the post. • Review their work to ensure accuracy to a high standard. • Work in partnership with peers and colleagues as part of an effective and efficient team. • Innovate and develop practical solutions to problems. • Excellent communication skills, able to adapt approaches and techniques dependent on the customers' needs. • Build effective relationships with stakeholders and work in partnership with other agencies. • Possess a high standard of literacy and numeracy. • Be self-motivated, have a confident, positive, and helpful outlook and be adaptive to change. • Demonstrate excellent communication and interpersonal skills – with the ability to adapt communication, both written and verbal dependent on purpose and needs of the audience.
Essential: Experience:	• Several years' experience of working in a customer focused environment. • Have at least 2 years relevant work experience within housing management, tenancy support and/or allocations • Demonstrate a commitment to achieving successful performance results and working to deadlines. • Experience of dealing with challenging situations with resilience, flexibility, and confidence in an appropriate manner.

Essential: Knowledge	• Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office e.g., Word, Excel and Outlook. • Experience of a housing management database system
Essential: Other Qualities	• Current and full driving licence and have access to own vehicle. • Able to travel independently to all locations within the allocated area at all times during the working day. • A commitment to help achieve the Society's aims and objectives. • Able to travel and undertake lone working throughout the allocated area.
Desirable	• Membership of an appropriate professional body e.g., CIH • Understand the sector in which Albyn operates and of the challenges facing the housing sector. • Have experience of developing, implementing, reviewing, and acting in accordance with policies and procedures. • Understand the current and developing legislation and social policy relevant to the Housing sector. • Ability to work with tenant and resident community groups. • Relevant experience of managing a work-related budget. • Relevant experience of contributing to the development of policies and procedures • Knowledge and understanding of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. • Knowledge and understanding of the Scottish Housing Regulator. • Understand the Data Protection Act. • Understand the Health and Safety requirements relevant to a Housing Association.