



DRAFT FEBRUARY 2017

Job Description: Housing Manager.

Responsible to: Chief Executive Officer.

Responsible for: Housing staff & volunteers, tenants, properties.

Organisational Context : Open Door North East is a Christian charity based in Middlesbrough whose mission is to relieve destitution and poverty while empowering and providing opportunities for those seeking sanctuary in the UK. One of the ways this is expressed is through providing supported accommodation for asylum seekers with no recourse to public funding as well as to refugees.

Job Context: You will provide housing management services for the charity including managing the occupancy, quality and supply of housing available to Open Door Housing. You will lead a small team of staff and volunteers in the day-to-day delivery of our housing services and will work directly to the CEO in exercising your duties.

Job Purpose:

- You will be responsible for the day-to-day management of Open Door houses including the management of privately owned houses managed by the charity.
- You will be responsible for developing robust property management / maintenance and rent collection systems to ensure effective cost control; quality of the product offered to tenants; and service offered to property owners.
- You will provide emergency out of hours cover on an agreed rota.
- You will recruit, provide support & training, and oversee Open Door Housing volunteers.

Duties & Responsibilities:

Managing Properties including;

- Ensure that each property is inspected on a fortnightly basis (personally or by other suitably trained individuals); reporting general health and safety and fire risk matters; maintenance and management issues and agreeing actions arising with the CEO (take photographs of concerns to allow discussion on best course of action).

- Investigate complaints made by tenants or third parties concerning the property, tenants living in the property or visitors.
- Undertaking minor repairs and maintenance as appropriate and/or arrange for repairs and maintenance to be undertaken by professional contractors, suitably qualified volunteers or the property owners.
- Organising gas safety, electrical safety, fire risk assessments and PAT testing.
- Organising annual property inspections to agree planned maintenance and replacement of household items with landlords.
- Ensure that monthly gas and electric reading (and if installed water meter readings) and ensure the finance officer makes appropriate payments.
- Record all readings on a spreadsheet and produce info graphics to compare properties and identify miss use.
- Ensure that monthly room inspections are undertaken to check radiator pressures and ensure no prohibited electrical items are in use. Or undertake immediate room inspections should anomalies be found in gas or electrical usage.
- Undertake annual review of utility contracts to ensure best price.
- Undertake annual reviews of management arrangements for each property with property owners.
- Work with the housing finance and administrator to ensure landlord and invoice payments are made and that invoices are sent out.
- Ensure the transfer to landlords on a 28-day cycle of rents owed minus expenditure and management fees.
- Ensure all work is undertaken in accordance with Open Door policies and procedures.
- Ensure effective verbal and written communication with tenants and property owners including the issuing of formal notices in accordance with agreed procedures.

Tenant Management

- Treat all information about the houses and clients as confidential.
- Treat clients of each house equally and be sensitive to cultural, religious and other differences.
- Register and show prospective tenants available properties.
- Sign up tenants, explaining the tenancy agreement, house rules, payment terms and rent collection procedures.
- Arrange for tenants to be taken and inducted into their new home including all aspects of living in the house, house rules, relevant polices etc.
- Support tenants with accessing Local Housing Allowance .
- Ensure that all tenants know about, and where appropriate make an appointment with, the refugee advice (“move on”) project worker for benefits and work club project worker for CV and help with finding employment
- Respect the privacy of the residents and carry out all duties in accordance with policies and procedures and housing management guidelines.
- Be sensitive to the cultural and religious differences of tenants.
- Talk to each tenant on at least a fortnightly basis and report any issues, problems and suggestions they may have.
- Manage the collection of rents and meet with the CEO on a fortnightly basis to agree actions relating to late payment and/or any other significant tenant/property related matter so agreed action can be taken.

- Ensure that up to date statistics are kept relating to existing and past tenants. This should include rent schedules and debt schedules.
- Support residents in accessing other services (health/social/voluntary etc.) as required.

New Lettings

- Respond to enquiries from property owners and investors who are interested in working with us. View properties and explain how Open Door housing operates. Make recommendations to the CEO regarding the taking on of new properties.
- Liaise with statutory services (council building inspectors/licensing etc.) as appropriate to ensure property is fit for purpose.
- Negotiate/work with landlords/prospective landlords to ensure improvements are made to bring properties up to an acceptable standard.
- Ensure that all fire risk assessments, gas and electrical safety and PAT testing are undertaken before properties are let.
- Agree service level agreements with landlords for the day-to-day management of their properties for an agreed fee.

General

- Ensure that all files and data bases are maintained in accordance with Open Door's policies and procedures.
- To work as part of a team while taking responsibility for your own workload and for managing staff and volunteers who are answerable to you.
- Meet with the housing finance and admin officer weekly to discuss and agree actions relating to property/tenant management/maintenance issues; income and expenditure; debtors; landlord payments and prioritisation of agreed actions etc.
- Meet with the CEO (or another as directed by the CEO) for supervision on a monthly basis
- Carry the "on call" phone for tenant/housing management issues (on rota)
- Keep up to date with relevant health & safety, property management, housing sector and related legislative changes and in liaison with CEO (and other staff members as appropriate) action changes necessary as appropriate.
- All the above provide a general guide to help define The Housing Managers role within Open Door. This list is not exhaustive and other duties and responsibilities may be added by your manager as the role develops.

Personal Specification/Key Competencies

Knowledge/Experience;

- A general desire to support those seeking sanctuary in the UK (essential).
- Some basic awareness of the issues facing asylum seekers and refugees (desirable).
- Experience of working with vulnerable people; paid or voluntary (desirable).
- Good general cultural awareness and ability to communication with people from many different countries etc.
- An understanding of the need for resident confidentiality (essential).
- An understanding of the need to maintain safe working boundaries when working with residents and to work in accordance with Open Door policies and procedures (essential).

Skills/Abilities

- Experience of private rented housing sector & property procurement (desirable).
- Knowledge of appropriate housing law and practises relating to HMO and homelessness (desirable)
- Experience of project management (essential).
- A good knowledge of health and safety practises (essential).
- Experience of inspecting & record taking, monitoring and evaluation (essential).
- Able to use own initiative to solve problems, including procuring repairs and maintenance (essential).
- Fully versed in the use of the main Microsoft Office word and excel (essential).
- Able to work well in a team or on own with minimal supervision (essential).
- To be prepared to take responsibility and act in the best interests of tenants, property owners and Open Door itself.
- Able to recruit/lead/organise volunteers.
- General written, administration and financial/budgetary management skills (essential).
- Good interpersonal skills (essential).
- To maintain strong lines of communication with other project staff.
- Strong organisational and planning skills.
- Prepared to work flexibly and out of hours.
- To take pride and have a profession approach to all you are tasked to do.
- Be generally supportive of the Christian ethos of the organisation.

Updated 3rd March 2017