

## JOB DESCRIPTION

We support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to achieve a meaningful and independent place in their community.

<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	<b>Community &amp; Housing Officer</b>
<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	<b>Acquisition &amp; Development Manager</b>
<b>SALARY:</b>	<b>Grade 3, Points 28 – 31, £29,069 - £31,850</b>
<b>DURATION:</b>	This role is funded for <b>up to 12 months</b> initially, with the possibility of extension.
<b>ADDITIONAL BENEFITS TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pension</b> (auto enrolment) and <b>Death in Service</b> benefit of 2 x salary</li> <li>• <b>Health Shield Benefit</b> - provides access to a range of valuable cash benefits and services, such as dental and optical care, physiotherapy, scanning facilities and 24-hour counselling and Advice Line (opportunity to upgrade and add family).</li> <li>• <b>Benenden Health</b> – Private Health Care paid for by Simon Community which gives permanent employees access to 24/7 GP services, medical diagnostics, medical treatment, physiotherapy (option to add family and friends for an additional cost).</li> <li>• <b>Holidays - 25 days per year</b> – increasing by 1 additional day per year of service up to a max of 30 days. Increase is effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> April each year, once a full year of service has been completed. Additionally, <b>12 customary holidays</b> (normally Bank and Public Holidays) at normal basic pay rate.</li> <li>• <b>Bank &amp; Public Holidays</b> – paid at premium rates at time and a half and double time.</li> <li>• <b>Additional Hours</b> – paid at time and a quarter.</li> <li>• <b>Other Benefits</b> – occupational sick pay, enhanced maternity/paternity leave entitlement, career breaks (subject to 2 years' continuous service).</li> <li>• <b>Training</b> – thorough accredited induction training and continued access to ongoing personal development.</li> </ul>
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>Business &amp; Finance Support</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	The role is primarily based in <b>Belfast</b> , with flexibility to work outside Belfast considered based on operational needs. As regular travel throughout Northern Ireland will be essential, applicants must hold a full, clean driving licence.
<b>HOURS OF WORK:</b>	<b>35 hours</b> per week on Monday to Friday basis. You may be required to work evenings, unsocial hours and/or weekends to meet business and service needs.
<b>JOB PURPOSE:</b>	To manage and sustain tenancies within the Simon Community Creating Homes initiative, support tenants transitioning from homelessness, and expand housing opportunities through partnerships with landlords and stakeholders.

## **MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:**

<b>Tenancy Management</b>	<p>As part of tenancy management, the Community &amp; Housing Officer will oversee the lifecycle of tenancies, ensuring compliance with policies, regulations, and best practices. Key responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Creating and Managing Tenancy Agreements:</b> Draft, review, and manage tenancy agreements in line with legal and organisational requirements, ensuring clarity and transparency for tenants.</li><li>• <b>Conducting Move-In Procedures:</b> Facilitate a smooth move-in process, including thorough property walkthroughs and providing tenants with essential information about their new home and tenancy obligations.</li><li>• <b>Deposit Handling:</b> Manage tenant deposits in compliance with the Tenancy Deposit Scheme Northern Ireland (TDS NI), including securing deposits, providing required information, and ensuring timely resolution of disputes if they arise.</li><li>• <b>Opening and Closing Inventories:</b> Conduct detailed property inventories at the start and end of tenancies to document the condition of the property, ensuring fairness in any claims or disputes over damages.</li><li>• <b>Handling Tenancy-Related Enquiries:</b> Act as the primary contact for tenant questions and concerns, providing timely assistance and guidance on issues such as rent payments, maintenance requests, and general tenancy matters.</li><li>• <b>Facilitating Rent Collection and Arrears Management:</b> Monitor rent payments, issue reminders for late payments, and work collaboratively with tenants to manage arrears and prevent escalation.</li><li>• <b>Ensuring Compliance and Property Standards:</b> Regularly check that tenants adhere to their tenancy agreement, including property care and adherence to community policies, and address breaches promptly and professionally.</li><li>• <b>End-of-Tenancy Procedures:</b> Oversee property inspections, close inventories, and manage the return of deposits or deductions, ensuring compliance with TDS NI and maintaining a fair process.</li></ul>
<b>Property Maintenance Coordination</b>	<p>The Community &amp; Housing Officer will ensure all properties are well-maintained, safe, and meet the required standards, creating a positive living environment for tenants. Key responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Main Point of Contact for Repairs:</b> Act as the primary liaison for tenants to report repair issues, ensuring that concerns are communicated effectively to the property maintenance team for prompt resolution.</li><li>• <b>Organising Routine Inspections:</b> Schedule and carry out routine property inspections to identify maintenance issues, ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, and address any tenant concerns about the condition of their home.</li><li>• <b>Coordinating Repairs and Maintenance:</b> Work closely with the property maintenance team to prioritise and arrange repairs, ensuring all work is completed to a high standard and within appropriate timeframes.</li><li>• <b>Emergency Response Management:</b> Respond swiftly to emergency maintenance situations, such as plumbing leaks or electrical faults, to ensure tenant safety and minimise property damage.</li><li>• <b>Tracking and Documenting Maintenance Work:</b> Maintain detailed records of maintenance requests, completed work, and tenant satisfaction.</li><li>• <b>Proactive Property Improvements:</b> Identify opportunities for proactive improvements to properties, such as energy efficiency grants, accessibility modifications, or aesthetic enhancements, to enhance tenant satisfaction and property value.</li><li>• <b>Tenant Communication During Maintenance:</b> Keep tenants informed about scheduled maintenance work, ensuring minimal disruption and addressing any related concerns.</li></ul>

<b>Tenant Support and Engagement</b>	<p>The Community &amp; Housing Officer will play a pivotal role in supporting tenants and fostering a positive, inclusive environment. Key responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Providing Ongoing Tenant Support:</b> Act as the primary point of contact for tenants, offering guidance and assistance to help them sustain their tenancies and address challenges.</li> <li>• <b>Supporting Housing Transitions:</b> Assist tenants moving from supported accommodation to independent living by providing tailored advice, practical guidance, and emotional support.</li> <li>• <b>Facilitating Access to Support Services:</b> Collaborate with Housing Solutions to connect tenants with resources such as financial advice, mental health services, or mediation support.</li> <li>• <b>Building Positive Tenant Relationships:</b> Develop strong, respectful relationships with tenants, ensuring open communication and trust.</li> <li>• <b>Promoting Engagement:</b> Encourage tenant participation in Simon Community events and initiatives that foster belonging and connections within the wider Simon Community network.</li> <li>• <b>Addressing Anti-Social Behaviour:</b> Monitor and address instances of anti-social behaviour, mediating disputes and working with relevant authorities to resolve issues professionally.</li> <li>• <b>Conducting Welfare Checks:</b> Perform regular welfare checks, especially for vulnerable tenants, to ensure their needs are met and additional support is provided.</li> <li>• <b>Conflict Resolution:</b> Mediate disputes between tenants or between tenants and the organisation, collaborating with Housing Solutions for fair and equitable outcomes.</li> <li>• <b>Ensuring Tenant Satisfaction:</b> Gather feedback regularly to assess satisfaction with the living environment and identify areas for improvement.</li> <li>• <b>Encouraging Sustained Tenancies:</b> Provide tailored support to help tenants manage responsibilities such as paying rent, maintaining the property, and complying with tenancy agreements.</li> <li>• <b>Improve access to Private Renting</b> for Simon Community clients</li> </ul>
<b>Rent Management</b>	<p>The Community &amp; Housing Officer will oversee aspects of rent collection and tenant support, working closely with the finance team and Housing Solutions to ensure effective rent management and support for tenants. Key responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Monitoring Rent Payments:</b> Track rent payments to identify any delays or arrears and ensure that tenants are fulfilling their financial obligations.</li> <li>• <b>Issuing Payment Reminders:</b> Communicate with tenants to remind them of overdue rent payments, using a professional and supportive approach.</li> <li>• <b>Managing Arrears:</b> Collaborate with Housing Solutions in supporting tenants experiencing financial difficulties which require additional support services, such as benefits advice, budgeting help, or debt management programmes.</li> <li>• <b>Liaising with the Finance Team:</b> Keep the finance team informed of any agreed repayment plans made with tenants, ensuring they can update financial records accurately and in a timely manner.</li> <li>• <b>Escalating Non-Payment Cases:</b> Work with SMT to escalate cases of persistent non-payment, following organisational procedures when necessary.</li> <li>• <b>Encouraging a Rent-Paying Culture:</b> Promote awareness among tenants about the importance of rent payments, reinforcing their role in sustaining tenancies and supporting the services provided by the organisation.</li> <li>• <b>Tenant Engagement and Education:</b> Offer tenants clear guidance on rent-related responsibilities and direct them to Housing Solutions for ongoing financial support where required.</li> </ul>
<b>Promoting and Expanding</b>	<p>The Community &amp; Housing Officer will actively work to grow and enhance the Simon Community Creating Homes initiative by building partnerships, promoting the</p>

<b>Opportunities:</b>	<p>programme, and securing additional housing opportunities. Key responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sourcing and Securing Properties:</b> Collaborate with private landlords, letting agencies, and Housing Solutions to identify and secure a pool of suitable, high-quality properties that meet tenant needs.</li> <li>• <b>Building Landlord Networks:</b> Establish and maintain strong, ongoing relationships with private landlords and property managers, promoting the benefits of partnering with Simon Community and addressing their concerns promptly and professionally.</li> <li>• <b>Marketing the Creating Homes Initiative:</b> Actively promote Simon Community's Creating Homes programme to private landlords, property managers, and letting agencies. Highlight the incentives, support, and shared social impact of working with the organisation.</li> <li>• <b>Driving Programme Growth:</b> Strategically identify and act on opportunities to expand the Creating Homes initiative, ensuring it continues to deliver innovative, sustainable housing solutions for those transitioning from homelessness.</li> <li>• <b>Monitoring Housing Trends:</b> Stay informed about developments in the local housing market, including changes in availability, pricing, and regulations, to inform decision-making and maximise opportunities.</li> <li>• <b>Facilitating Private Sector Access:</b> Support staff and tenants in identifying and transitioning into private sector housing options that align with their individual needs, ensuring a smooth and sustainable move.</li> <li>• <b>Collaborating with Housing Solutions:</b> Work closely with Housing Solutions and other internal teams to match tenants with the most suitable housing opportunities and ensure ongoing support for tenancy sustainment.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Collaboration</b>	<p>The Community &amp; Housing Officer will work closely with external partners and stakeholders to enhance service delivery and address homelessness. Key responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Collaborating with Housing Solutions and Stakeholders:</b> Partner with external agencies such as the Housing Executive, social services, and community organisations to provide integrated support for tenants.</li> <li>• <b>Promoting Awareness and Reducing Stigma:</b> Work to reduce stigma around homelessness by engaging the wider community in educational initiatives, events, and advocacy.</li> <li>• <b>Representing Simon Community:</b> Act as an ambassador for the organisation at local forums, stakeholder meetings, and outreach events to promote the mission and values of Simon Community.</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure Quality Assurance/ Continuous Improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and participate in the implementation of agreed improvement plans within a culture of continuous improvement and service excellence.</li> <li>• Carry out all duties in accordance with Simon Community quality procedures.</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure Health and Safety and Good Housekeeping Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always adhere to the Simon Community N.I. health and safety policy.</li> <li>• Record and report any defects and accidents in the property.</li> <li>• Act as fire warden and/or first aider as needed.</li> <li>• Support health and safety risk assessments as appropriate, and the implementation of any agreed actions.</li> </ul>
<b>Promote Equal Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to promoting an environment where equality of opportunity, anti-discriminatory practice, diversity, individual rights and choice are promoted in accordance with Simon Community principles, policies and procedures.</li> </ul>
<b>Promote our aims and objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the organisation's mission, values, aims and objectives and ensure all organisational Policies and Procedures and Staff Code of Practice are followed at all times.</li> </ul>

Please note that this job description provides an indication of the roles and responsibilities and is not an exclusive list of the duties that the postholder may be asked to undertake.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

<b>ESSENTIAL CRITERIA</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CIH Level 4 qualification in Housing or degree in a related discipline (e.g., Housing, Property Management, Social Policy) <b>OR</b> A minimum of two years' relevant experience in a housing-related role with a commitment to obtaining a CIH Level 4 qualification within an agreed timeframe.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the operation and regulation of the private rented sector in Northern Ireland, including landlord responsibilities and tenant rights.</li> <li>3. Show a strong understanding of housing supply and availability in Northern Ireland, particularly in relation to social housing, the private rented sector, and people at risk of homelessness.</li> <li>4. Proven ability to build and maintain strong relationships with landlords, tenants, and other stakeholders.</li> <li>5. Hold a full, clean driving licence (or alternative means of travel if a disability prevents driving), as regular travel across Northern Ireland will be essential.</li> </ol>
<b>DESIRABLE CRITERIA</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Level 5 or above CIH qualification in Housing or a postgraduate degree in a related field such as Property Management, Housing Policy, or Social Work.</li> <li>2. Previous experience working with individuals at risk of or transitioning out of homelessness, particularly in a supported housing or tenancy sustainment role.</li> <li>3. Familiarity with social housing allocation systems in Northern Ireland, including the Common Selection Scheme.</li> <li>4. Familiarity with housing or property management systems and strong IT skills for record-keeping and reporting.</li> </ol>
<b>OUR VALUES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our values are fundamental to how we work with clients and each other.</li> <li>• We are driven by our values of being <b>non-judgmental</b>, being <b>trustworthy</b> and being <b>dedicated</b> to the people we support.</li> </ul>