

# Job Pack

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## Senior Housing Options Officer



Lewes District Council



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## Location

Thank you for taking the time to look at the details of this post.

Located in the heart of the Sussex countryside and one of the principal towns of the South Downs National Park Lewes offers the best of town and country. It is no surprise that the District is considered among the most desirable places to live and work in the UK.

Lewes town is one of the jewels of the South Downs National Park and the District also possesses many picturesque towns and villages, all with their own unique character.

Whilst nearby Eastbourne is a resort town on England's southeast coast. On the seafront are Victorian hotels, the 19th-century Eastbourne Pier and a 1930s bandstand. Discover a wide range of shops in Eastbourne from high street shopping at The Beacon to the quaint Victorian shopping streets of Little Chelsea, and the boutiques in the Enterprise Centre.

One of the most attractive aspects of living and working in the Lewes and Eastbourne area is the quality of life it has to offer. It is a truly exceptional location. Make the most of the area by enjoying a wide range of activities including country walks, water sports and much more.

Our offices in Lewes and Eastbourne are located close to Train Stations with direct connections to the coast and London. However, the Council provide all the necessary IT and infrastructure to enable home working and maintain a good work life balance

***“The best of town, country and coast”***

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**We are able to offer our staff a range of benefits and access to discounts as follows:**

- Membership at local leisure centres who are part of Wave Leisure across the District and Borough and at the Sovereign Centre in Eastbourne.
- Kaarp Benefits which are only available to Local Government employees and includes between 3 and 4.5% savings at supermarkets when purchasing a gift card as well as savings on attractions and discounts on many other things.
- Chorus Workplace Savings Scheme
- Boundless which includes up to 10% off high-street and supermarket goods through discounted pre-paid shopping cards.
- CSSC which includes free entry to a number of tourist attractions and a free tastecard as well as discounted cinema visits and 4% saving on supermarket shopping through pre-paid shopping cards.
- Public Sector Discounts – by paying £9.99 for a Black Card £2.99 staff are able to access discounts such as 2.5% cashback – ASDA, 3.5% cashback – Sainsbury's, Waitrose and M&S, 4.5% cashback on B&Q and Primark and 5% cashback – Boots, Carpetright, Clarks, feelunique, Halfords, Harvester, John Lewis, National Express, New Look, River Island, Body Shop, Nike, The White Company, The Works, Waterstones, Wilko etc.
- Easit – the Councils have joined the Queens Award winning easitNETWORK group through which we hope to influence travel behaviour in the area by providing a full range of transport options to encourage staff to adopt more sustainable commuting habits. EasitNETWORK is a social enterprise, not for profit organisation that is all about sustainable travel. Our staff can benefit from many transport discounts including 15% discount on Southern rail journeys across the network (except central London zones 1,2,+ 3); including peak time travel; 10% discount at Halfords on all bikes, cycling accessories, servicing and parts; 15% discounts on monthly and annual bike insurance and 25% discount on new, electric, folding Beat Bikes.
- Eyesight tests vouchers are available for all drivers and computer users which include a discount off selected glasses and when glasses are required solely for VDU use.
- Vouchers for fully funded flu vaccinations through Boots which staff can redeem, arrange and book at a participating Boots Pharmacy of their choice.
- Cyclescheme - The UK's leading provider of the cycle to work scheme and the founding member of the Cycle to Work Alliance. It enables our staff to get a bike tax-free, saving between 25-39%. Participants can choose from over 2,000 retailers and enjoy the ability to shop in-store or online.

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- We also understand that balancing everyday life together with the requirements of work and home can create pressures for all of us. To support our staff in achieving this balance we have an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) in place. Our EAP is currently provided by Health Assured an independent external organisation who work to a robust professional code of strict confidentiality.
  - They offer both emotional and practical support to our staff when they feel they need it. They also have qualified legal advisors who will assist with any legal matters. They will provide advice and guidance on matters such as writing a will, tenancy and housing concerns, divorce procedures, boundary disputes, probate costs, motoring issues, property and partnership rights and immigration information.
  - Our EAP is available 24/7, 365 days and year. As part of this service we are also able to offer staff access to an app where they can find useful articles and webinars alongside an enhanced set of wellbeing tools and engaging features to support wellbeing and wellness.
  - Within the Councils we have a number of staff trained to provide 'first aid' to staff experiencing mental health issues. Mental Health first aiders are trained to listen, reassure and respond, even in a crisis – and even potentially stop a crisis from happening.
  - They are able to empower others to access the support they might need for successful management of symptoms. This could include self-help books or websites, accessing services via their GP, the EAP, other support groups and more.

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## Job Description

<b>Post Title</b>	<b>Senior Housing Options Officer</b>
<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Homes First</b>
<b>Team</b>	<b>Housing Options &amp; Wellbeing</b>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>D / E</b>
<b>Reports to</b>	<b>Team Leader (Housing Options)</b>
<b>Date prepared</b>	<b>June 2017</b>

### Job Purpose

- Provide customer focused specialist advice on a range of statutory and non statutory services.
- To input and deliver appropriate areas of the Corporate Strategy and associated policies and plans.
- To provide technical input to corporate projects and strategic programmes.

### Key Tasks

#### Level 1

1. To deliver a specialist, professional service with high standards of advice and support and resolving cases of varying complexity as they arise.
2. Ensure compliance with statutory regulations, legislation, professional codes of practice and adherence to Council policy.
3. Being accountable for complex or contentious applications, cases and inspections, ensuring satisfactory resolution and liaising with external agencies and partners including courts, tribunal services and other formal bodies.
4. Support, guide and advise the case management team, customer services and mobile locality teams delivering the service on less complex cases.
5. Specify and manage projects, budgets and contracts that deliver community and corporate objectives.

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6. Prepare and present reports to Cabinet, Council committees and other internal and external meetings.
  7. To provide technical expertise for strategy development.
  8. Ensure personal, professional development is maintained to the required standards.

## **Level 2**

As above and;

9. Develop and manage Council policies and contribute to the Corporate Plan and the development of service strategy across the councils' alongside the Strategic and Partnership Leads.

## **Corporate Accountabilities**

1. To promote equality of opportunity in service delivery in line with strategic commitment and corporate policies.
2. To promote a culture that is supportive of the Council's purpose, aims and values, and to take all reasonable steps to maintain good employee relations.
3. Staff are encouraged to participate fully in promoting a safety culture to protect the safety and health of themselves, colleagues and other people affected by the Council's activities.
4. To understand and apply the council's Data Protection and Data Quality policy and procedures.
5. Any other duties commensurate with the nature of the post.
6. You will be required to support the Borough Councils' corporate priorities and to ensure business continuity eg emergency response, elections, deployment to critical services.
7. Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils' are committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy and Procedures provides a framework within the Council, setting out responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk.

The policy applies to all employees, councillors, volunteers and service providers that are commissioned by the council.

8. To work within the Council's Core Competency Framework. Central to the delivery of the role are the values and behaviours set out below. These are shared by all employees and applied to everything we do. The bullet points for each competency are examples of performance required:

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## Core Competencies

Sharing the Vision - Shaping the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands the Council's purpose, context, goals, objectives and values, and is willing to behave consistently with them.</li><li>• Knows the strategic direction of the Council and acts in support of it.</li></ul>
Communicating Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contributes to and participates in an organisation where high quality information flows smoothly both internally and externally.</li><li>• Works positively to gain understanding from others.</li></ul>
Driving Improvement Performance &Results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Takes responsibility and ownership for decisions, actions and results.</li><li>• Takes actions to improve skills, knowledge and level of contribution.</li><li>• Seeks and delivers high standards for self, team and Council</li></ul>
Self Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Self motivated and professional.</li><li>• Is organised and uses time and technology efficiently.</li><li>• Adopts a flexible approach to change</li></ul>
Delivering for our Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates a desire to identify and give priority to meeting and exceeding the needs of internal and external customers, generating high levels of customer satisfaction</li></ul>
Working Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Actively contributes to team working, sharing information, valuing the input of others.</li><li>• Works co-operatively and is committed to building, productive, positive relationships.</li><li>• Demonstrates commitment to achieving overall team objectives</li></ul>

**This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time it was drawn up. Such details will vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility involved.**



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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### QUALIFICATIONS

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Educated to Level 3 standard or equivalent or qualified by strong relevant experience.</li><li>• Relevant qualification or qualified by track record of relevant experience.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Institute of Customer Services (or equivalent).</li><li>• Degree or equivalent.</li><li>• Membership of relevant professional body.</li></ul>

### TRAINING

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commitment to undertake continuing professional development.</li></ul>	

### SKILLS & ABILITIES

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proactive with commitment to provision of excellent customer service.</li><li>• Ability to prioritise, meet deadlines and work effectively under pressure.</li><li>• Good communication skills both written and verbal to include report writing, presentation and influencing skills.</li><li>• Verbal reasoning.</li><li>• Decision making and problem solving.</li><li>• Committed to high standards of performance and quality.</li><li>• Able to communicate effectively with customers, colleagues, Council Officers and external agencies.</li><li>• Ability to effectively organise own and team workload to meet deadlines.</li><li>• Ability to mentor and coach other team members.</li><li>• Ability to actively listen in order to extract and assess important information to ensure that the</li></ul>	



<p>appropriate arrangements are made to support the customer's needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to work calmly and sensitively.</li> <li>• To be confident, flexible and the ability to work on own initiative.</li> <li>• Ability to use IT systems to gather, store and produce reports and process information.</li> <li>• Ability to work, support and deliver services within the Councils Equalities Policy.</li> </ul>	
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## KNOWLEDGE

<p><b>Essential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working knowledge of Microsoft Office.</li> <li>• Excellent Knowledge of services provided across the councils.</li> <li>• A good knowledge of the working practices and methodologies of at least one of the relevant specialist services.</li> <li>• Good working knowledge of legislation and developments within the specialism.</li> <li>• Equalities policy and procedures.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Desirable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good knowledge of terminology and acronyms used by service areas.</li> <li>• Contracts and procurement methods and practices.</li> <li>• Project and/or change management.</li> </ul>
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## EXPERIENCE

<p><b>Essential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional competence / expertise and proven experience in the relevant specialism(s).</li> <li>• Assisting in planning and delivering projects/ programmes.</li> <li>• Preparation and presentation of reports.</li> <li>• Experience in dealing with service users and stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Desirable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good knowledge of terminology and acronyms used by service areas.</li> <li>• Contracts and procurement methods and practices.</li> <li>• Project and/or change management.</li> </ul>
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## PHYSICAL, LEGAL AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An engaging, enthusiastic and positive manner with a strong “can do” approach.</li><li>• Able to undertake site inspections.</li><li>• Ability to travel across Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough.</li><li>• Willingness to work within the council’s Core Competency Framework.</li><li>• Willingness to develop skills and knowledge in other areas to provide flexibility within the service.</li></ul>	

***All staff must be prepared to have an understanding of the Equal Opportunities, Customer Care and Health and Safety policies. Managers in particular, must have a commitment to implement and abide by these policies.***

### **Senior Housing Options Officer Role Descriptor**

There are 2 levels of Senior Housing Options Officer. Appointment to Level 1 or 2 is dependent upon experience and qualifications.

This role will be responsible for the provision of specialist advice in Housing Options and Wellbeing.

#### Senior Officer Level 1

Responsibilities will include:

- Providing customer focused specialist advice within the councils, to external agencies and partners, to members and to customers.
- Responding to reports that require a rapid response including responding to complaints or requests for information about service provision.
- Managing complex or contentious applications, cases and inspections acting as a single point of contact for customer on those cases.
- Managing key relationships with members, partners, contractors and other stakeholders.

Providing support to caseworkers by:

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- Reviewing and approving recommendations on case outcomes.
  - Attending difficult or complex site or home visits and meetings.
  - Specifying schedules, conditions and works and assisting caseworkers in drafting formal notifications and other correspondence.
  - Provide technical mentoring and support to all teams delivering part of the service.
  - Ensuring ongoing knowledge transfer of specialist knowledge to relevant teams across the councils.

Ensuring delivery of a continually improving, high quality service will include:

- Monitoring the quality of advice provided to customers
- Manage service budgets
- Auditing recommendations and decisions and the overall outcome of requests, reports or cases.
- Analysis of service or customer complaints.
- Regular review of processes, scripts, letters and information sheets and recommend updates based upon specialist knowledge.
- Monitoring of external contractors to ensure high quality services are being provided.
- Undertake targeted preventative campaigns based upon volume and types of cases coming through the councils.
- Ensuring the right level of specialist advice is accessible at first point of contact to enable the right decisions to be made or actions taken at the earliest possible opportunity for our customers.

#### Senior Housing Options Officer (Level 2)

In addition to the above activities the Specialist Level 2 will:

- Develop and manage Council policies related to their specialism.
- Contribute to the councils' Corporate Plans.
- Develop service strategy across the councils working collaboratively with Strategic and Partnership Leads.
- Handle highly complex multi specialist cases.

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# TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils have been on a transformational journey to fully integrate services. This has involved integrating staff teams, processes and systems whilst still retaining sovereignty of the individual councils.

The employer will be Eastbourne Borough Council.

## Duration

This is a permanent contract.

## Conditions of Service

The conditions of service for this post are for the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services. The post is graded Band D/E.

## Salary

The spinal column points (SCP) for the post are as follows:

SCP 15	£29,563	SCP 22	£33,196	SCP 29	£38,626
SCP 16	£30,051	SCP 23	£33,366	SCP 30	£39,513
SCP 17	£30,550	SCP 24	£34,314	SCP 31	£40,476
SCP 18	£31,059	SCP 25	£35,235	SCP 32	£41,511
SCP 19	£31,577	SCP 26	£36,124	SCP 33	£42,708
SCP 20	£32,106	SCP 27	£37,035	SCP 34	£43,693
SCP 21	£32,645	SCP 28	£37,938		

## Hours

The hours for this post are 37 a week. These will be worked within operational requirements. Actual starting and finishing times will be agreed with your manager. Within these boundaries the Council operates a flexitime scheme for all but Heads of Service. Details will be supplied to the successful candidate upon appointment.

## Place of Work

Your normal place of work will be from home, however you will be required to attend the offices at either Eastbourne or Lewes, or such other places within the boundaries of Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough as may be reasonably required.

In particular, you will be required to:

- Budget for and cover the costs of all expenses incurred (including travel costs) to attend Team Meetings or Events, as well as for training at any of the Councils' sites.
- Budget for and allocate time to travel to appointments in the Councils boundaries where required. For example, visits that need to be performed as part of your role and cannot reasonably or appropriately be carried out remotely.
- Budget for and cover all postage costs (including return postage from Councils sites to your home) for all IT and other work equipment, when this needs to be replaced or

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- updated. This includes but is not limited to, your work phone/headset and your laptop, such as for updates to software that need your laptop onsite connected to the LAN.
  - Continue to participate in all meetings as reasonably required, such as 121 meetings, team meetings, attendance management meetings, or consultations on any proposed changes, such as restructures. Where possible and appropriate, these meetings will be conducted remotely but where it is not possible or it is deemed inappropriate for the meeting to be conducted remotely, you will be required to cover all expenses incurred (including travel) for your attendance at said meetings.

### **Probationary Period**

All posts are subject to a six months' probationary period where your suitability for the post will be assessed. During this time your progress will be reviewed and discussed with you at regular intervals.

### **Casual User Car Mileage**

You will be entitled to mileage as a casual user on official business. This mileage is reviewed annually.

### **Annual Leave**

The leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March and entitlement varies with length of service. The current minimum entitlement is 26 days. This increases to 30 days in the leave year following completion of five years' service. Subject to the demands of the post, you will normally receive additional paid leave on each Public Holiday.

An employee who starts part way through the year will receive a proportion of the basic holiday entitlement. For operational reasons some Service Areas have to restrict the maximum amount of holiday taken at any one time and its timing in the year. Holiday commitments entered into before taking up an appointment will be honoured wherever possible.

### **Notice Period**

The contract of employment applicable to this post will specify a minimum period of one calendar months increasing to two calendar months when paid from SCP 23, to be given by either side.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service**

Due to the nature of the work, if you are offered this position you will be required to apply to the Disclosure and Barring Service for an "Enhanced Disclosure". A disclosure provides details of a person's criminal record including convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer. It will also contain details from lists held by the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills and information held by local police forces.

The information received from the Disclosure and Barring Service will be kept confidential and the information will be objectively assessed to establish whether you are suitable for the position. We will ensure that conviction information is not misused and that ex-offenders are not treated unfairly. The Council will pay for the check to be made and you will receive full

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information about the checks and guidance on how to complete the form if you are offered this position.

### **Pension**

We provide membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to employees aged under 75 who have a contract of employment that is for at least 3 months. The LGPS is a qualifying pension scheme, which means it meets or exceeds the government's standards.

All employees are automatically entered into the Local Government Pension Scheme unless they choose to make alternative provision for pension. Scheme members contribute the percentage of salary as set out in the table below. We will also make an employer's contribution to the scheme.

The contribution bands with effect from 01 April 2025 are:

Pay Range	Contribution
Up to £17,800	5.50%
£17,801 to £28,000	5.80%
£28,001 to £45,600	6.50%
£45,601 to £57,700	6.80%
£57,701 to £81,000	8.50%
£81,001 to £114,800	9.90%
£114,801 - £135,300	10.50%
£135,301 - £203,000	11.40%
£203,001 or more	12.50%

The pay ranges will be increased each year from 01 April in line with inflation. Based on the salary for this role, the contribution will be 6.5%.