



Shelter for those fleeing persecution abroad

SENIOR PROJECT SUPPORT WORKER AUGUST 2023



We would like to thank you for your interest in applying for the role of Senior Project Support Worker (3.5 days, 26 hours per week,) or Finance Officer (1.5 days, 11 hours per week) for our Leeds Project. These roles are currently carried out by one person. We will consider applications from people with the skills and experience who want to carry out both roles or from people who want to apply for one part-time role. We hope that the job pack provides you with all the information you need to make a decision whether this role may be right for you.

Overview of our work at Abigail

Housing

Abigail Housing is a Yorkshire based charitable organisation founded in 2007, working across Leeds and Bradford, existing to support refugees and asylum seekers who have fled persecution abroad and become homeless at the end of the asylum process. We have 14 years' experience of meeting the needs of destitute asylum seekers and refugees, alleviating isolation and preventing homelessness whilst collaborating with other local services to enable those who settle here to rebuild their lives.

Abigail Housing delivers two projects across Leeds and Bradford: Both projects are developing 'experts by experience' groups to work closely with our residents to improve and develop our services to meet their needs. Both projects as well as having paid staff recruit volunteers to enhance what we do.

Leeds Refugee Project prevents homelessness and supports engagement among newly recognised refugees who have recently been granted Leave to Remain through temporary supported housing, sign-posting advice to access employment, education, welfare benefits and accessing long-term housing and setting up a new tenancy. We currently manage 18 houses or flats offering accommodation to up to 68 adult refugees in Leeds, mostly to single people. One of our houses is currently let to a family with children. All of the properties we manage in Leeds are owned by private landlords. The team in Leeds also includes a project manager, a project support worker, a volunteer coordinator, finance officer - these are a mixture of full and part-time roles. At any one time we have around 12-15 people volunteering with the project.

Bradford Destitution Project provides accommodation and support up to 15 destitute refused asylum seekers at any given time, across the 5 properties we manage, which we either own, lease on peppercorn rents, or have been gifted from generous landlords. We also have an additional large family size property which we own, which is currently accommodating a refugee family. The provision offered at the project is the largest of its kind in the area, people seeking asylum to experience stability and safety while seeking legal help to make further submissions to the Home Office. All residents access a weekly drop-in, held at our office facility. This is a welcoming space where residents can collect their weekly allowance (£20), food parcels, travel expenses to appointments and engage with other support. The Destitution Project provides residents with stability and safety, promotes social inclusion, encourages independence, and prevents homelessness and destitution.

Our Mission:

"Shelter for those fleeing persecution abroad". A housing charity and company limited by guarantee, providing temporary accommodation and associated support to destitute asylum seekers and recently recognised refugees, in housing need across West Yorkshire. Through:

- Preventing destitution and homelessness.
- Alleviating social exclusion.
- Re-engagement with the asylum process.
- Support with longer-term housing options.
- Assistance with accessing other services which support health, wellbeing, rights and entitlements and quality of life.

Our Vision:

'Creating a welcoming environment for all people seeking sanctuary in West Yorkshire'.

Our Values:



Role Brief

As a **Senior Project Support Worker** with Abigail Housing, you will be a dynamic individual with experience of housing support work. You will be the main point of contact for the residents accommodated at the service. You will assist the Project Manager in delivering the Leeds Project and oversee the welfare of the residents accommodated in the 18 properties we manage, ensuring their needs are met. You will oversee the management of the houses and flats we manage at the Project and assist residents with managing their Licence or Tenancy Agreements. You will be a team player, demonstrate a participatory working approach, flexible to the needs of the project and able to work on own initiative. You will occasionally be required to lead the service, to cover any absences of the Project Manager, which will also include the supervision of staff and volunteers

What to expect from the role

The position of Senior Project Support Worker (Leeds) is a part-time role, 26 hours per week (3.5 days), working alongside the Leeds Team.

You will be required to work collaboratively with all members of the staff team at Abigail Housing, the charities volunteers and other external partners, organisations and agencies across the network.

You can expect a role which offers variety, autonomy, training and opportunities to take initiative, and a board committed to the personal and professional development of staff.

As an organisation we are proud of the reputation we have developed across the network, however we are never complacent and are committed to the improvement and long-term development of our services, ensuring we are working with those we support rather than for those we support.

Our key priorities at the charity are:

- Encouraging service user involvement, ensuring those who access our services have regular opportunities to input into service delivery and are central to the delivery of our work
- Strengthening Partnerships, to develop our services, preventing the duplication of work and to consider ways of becoming more sustainable
- We are committed to actively working towards becoming an Anti-Racist organisation.

We are looking for an individual who will assist us with delivering this vision.

The job description included in this job pack provides more detailed information about the role.

Abigail Housing

Senior Project Support Worker

Job Description

Title: Senior Project Support Worker (Leeds)

Salary: NJC SCP 15-18 £23,953- £25,419 p.a (Full-Time) +5% pension contribution.

The worker will be able to claim travel costs at the Local Authority casual car users' or cyclists' rate.

Contract length: Permanent (subject to funding).

Hours: 26 Hours per week with the equivalent of 25 days' annual leave (pro rata for part-time) + public holidays.

Normal working hours will be 9.30am-5.30pm, days to be arranged, however the post will also involve working occasional evenings and weekends to facilitate meetings, publicity and client support. In such cases time off in lieu is to be taken.

Staff are on-call over weekends on a rota basis. Payment is £25 per day plus TOIL for time worked.

Primary work base: Abigail Housing (AH)'s Leeds office - some duties can be carried out from home.

Responsible to: CEO and Abigail Board of Directors

Reports to: Leeds Project Manager

Probation Period: 6 months

Background to the post

Abigail Housing (AH) provides accommodation and support to people made homeless at the end of the asylum process. We have two projects: the Bradford based Destitution Project which has capacity to house 19 refused asylum seekers at any given time, who cannot return safely to their country of origin, and who are actively working to re-establish their asylum claims. The Leeds based Refugee Project houses up to 72 refugees who have recently been granted leave to remain status.

Primary objectives of the post

To support refugees living in AH accommodation, including support to people as they move on into social housing. To assist maintenance and running of the houses AH has responsibility for, as well as to promote the work of the charity to ensure its continuation. To deputise for the Project Manager/Co-CEO and to lead the Leeds Project. To take line management responsibility for the housing support worker (s).

Key responsibilities and accountabilities

Supervision, Accountability and Training

1. May for periods of working time alone, taking care to consult with Project Managers/Co-CEO's where needed.
- 2.To provide support, supervision and line management to the Housing Support worker(s), relief workers and students on placement
- 3.To work with the volunteer coordinator to provide support to volunteers carrying out housing support or administrative roles with the charity
- 4.To carry out other duties as may be reasonably required to assist the efficient and effective delivery of the service, as directed by Co-CEO/project manager or the board.
- 5.To attend relevant training as required.

Refugee Resident Support

- 1.To liaise with referral agencies to establish effective working arrangements and then to process referrals.
- 2.To allocate vacant rooms in line with agreed allocation policies, including viewing and initial paperwork with prospective residents.
- 3.To have responsibility for the general welfare of refugee residents, including initial assessments, completing Housing Benefit/Universal credit applications,

- assisting with any changes to existing benefit claims.
4. To provide ongoing support in managing benefit claims.
5. To collect and record Housing Benefit payments, service charges and rent payments for refugees who are working.
6. To manage residents' move on options, including supporting applications for social housing, organising homeless assessments, assisting with bidding and supporting actual move on.
7. To support residents in accessing other support services to ensure their needs are met in a number of areas: health, emotional, spiritual, physical etc. Enabling them to maintain their housing with AH and be better able to manage their own tenancy in the future.
8. To work with residents to maintain their licence or tenancy agreement and confront unacceptable behaviour, taking appropriate action where necessary.
9. To provide other integration support, as required, to refugee residents, including managing correspondence, dealing with family reunions and signposting to other services.
10. To maintain records of work with residents.
11. To organise and participate in regular drop-in sessions and other meetings for residents
12. Respond to any other presenting needs of residents as required.
13. To represent Abigail Housing at partnership or other network meetings aimed at enhancing/developing services for refugees.

Property Management

1. To liaise with maintenance contractors and landlords regarding repairs and servicing at houses.
2. Where necessary to obtain quotes from contractors
3. To carry out property inspections
4. To carry out minor repairs, maintenance and redecoration.
5. To carry out fire alarm tests
6. To oversee health and safety to ensure the safety and welfare of residents, with particular regard to fire safety and keeping properties clean.
7. To ensure the houses are adequately furnished to meet residents' needs, and ensure appliances are working efficiently.
8. To oversee and manage the paying of utilities and council tax out of the charity's account.
9. To run house meetings for residents, as necessary.

Administration

1. To take responsibility for all related record keeping, including but not exhaustive resident case notes, resident support/evaluation forms, output and outcome monitoring data, invoices and receipts for credit card transactions, referral information, petty cash records, invoices for repairs and purchases needed for the properties.
2. To take care of all equipment provided, including laptop and mobile phone, and the office space.
3. To liaise with other staff to ensure all information related to invoices, receipts, Petty Cash, project data and other required project information is provided as and when required. Facilitating efficient and effective record keeping.

Development Work

1. To assist with funding bids to trusts etc.
2. To assist with representing the charity at fundraising events.
3. To communicate effectively and professionally with local supporters including; communities, individuals, faith centres and businesses.

Supervision, Accountability and Training

1. To work for periods of time alone, taking care to consult with the Senior Project Support Worker and members of the AH Management team.
2. To carry out other duties as may be reasonably required to assist the efficient and effective delivery of the service, as directed by the Senior Project Support Worker and other members of AH's Senior Management team.

Decision making

The post holder will be able to liaise with other AH staff but will probably spend some time working alone and will be expected to use their own initiative. They will be expected to work within current AH policy and guidelines at all times.

Assets, materials

The post holder will be based at both AH's rented offices in Leeds. The post holder will be responsible for the safe keeping of materials, equipment and cash belonging to the Project. They will adhere to the AH policies regarding health and safety and confidentiality.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

Abigail Housing is actively opposed to all forms of discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, ethnic origin, nationality, political belief, religion, marital status, domestic circumstance, immigration status, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, trade union activity, health or formal education.

Abigail Housing particularly welcomes applications from those with lived experience of seeking asylum in the UK, those from an ethnic minority background and underrepresented communities. Appointments will be made on merit

Person Specification

Attributes

Essential

Desirable

Identified

Qualifications

- Relevant experience, paid or voluntary, including lived experience of the asylum system.
- Educated to degree level.
- Other training or qualifications useful to this role.

Application form

Experience

- Paid or voluntary experience of providing frontline support in housing or health/social care sectors with vulnerable and marginalised communities.
- Paid or voluntary work with asylum seekers/refugees.
- Paid or voluntary work within homelessness sector.
- Experience of working in housing.
- Experience of working with Housing Benefit claims in supported housing.

Application form & interview

Special Knowledge

- Understanding of health and social care issues related to marginalised communities, in the current context.
- Experience of advocating on behalf of marginalised communities.
- Understanding issues related to homelessness.
- Understanding of the asylum process
- Understanding rights and entitlements of asylum seekers and refugees.

Application form & Interview

Attributes

Essential

Desirable

Identified

Special Knowledge cont.

- Knowledge of the issues refugees and asylum seekers face.
- Understanding organisational policies within housing, health and social care.
- Understanding how charities receive funding.
- Knowledge of housing standards and legislation.
- An awareness and knowledge of the local services in Leeds which support asylum seekers and refugees.
- Understanding the practical and holistic needs of refused asylum seekers and refugees.

Attributes

- An interest in supporting the wellbeing of asylum seekers and refugees.
- Ability to self-motivate, prioritise and take initiative.
- Demonstrates a professional attitude.
- A strong and reliable work ethic.
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team and independently.

Application form,
Interview &
References

Attributes

Essential

Desirable

Identified

Attributes cont.

- Demonstrates understanding of confidentiality and is committed to providing equal opportunities and engaging in anti-discriminatory practice.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Empathetic, compassionate and culturally competent.
- Ability to empower others.
- Welcomes a participatory approach from all stakeholders.
- Works in alignment with the principles and values of the organisation.

Practical and Intellectual Skills

- Confident taking initiative and working autonomously.
 - A commitment to personal and professional development.
 - Competent in written and spoken English.
- Ability to speak and translate other languages spoken in refugee communities e.g. French, Arabic, Amharic, Farsi, Urdu, Pashto, Tigrinya.

Application
form,
Interview &
References

<u>Attributes</u>	<u>Essential</u>	<u>Desirable</u>	<u>Identified</u>
Practical and Intellectual Skills cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT literate, including: Microsoft packages, Spreadsheets, Zoom, Teams • Assured telephone manner. • Competant using Social Media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of using databases. 	Application form, Interview & References
Additional Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full UK driving licence and access to own vehicle. • Willing to work flexibly (including home working). • Willing to work On Call to provide out of hours cover on alternative weekends, public holidays, and covering staff absences (daytimes). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To cover holidays/sickness of the the Senior Project Support Worker. 	Application form & Interview

Key Details

Hours: 26 hours Per Week (3.5 days)

Location: Leeds Project Office

Salary: £23,953- £25,419 p.a (Full-Time) per annum, pro rata

Contract: Permanent subject to funding.

Closing Date: No later than 5pm on the 15th September 2023

Interview: Week Commencing 25th September 2023

Abigail Housing particularly welcomes applications from those with lived experience of seeking asylum in the UK, those from an ethnic minority background and underrepresented communities.

How to Apply.

To apply for the post, please complete and send the separately attached application form, alongside a completed equal opportunities monitoring form, to neal@abigailhousing.org.uk.

You will need to provide contact details of two referees, one of which should be your most recent employer (paid or voluntary).

Please provide evidence of how you meet the person specifications within your application.

The closing date for applications is 15th September 2023 (no later than 5pm).

Interviews will be conducted week commencing 25th September 2023 at our Leeds office

Please be advised we will only contact short-listed candidates