

Job profile

Supported housing worker



Working in supported housing is very varied and immensely rewarding. You will be working with some of the most vulnerable people in society and making a real difference to their lives. But it is also challenging and can be very demanding so it's important to make sure that you have a healthy work/life balance and know when to ask for help and support from your line manager.

Supported housing takes two main forms:

- **Accommodation-based** where support is attached to housing provision such as sheltered housing for older people or refuges and hostels. In this setting workers may live on-site, stay overnight on a shift basis or just visit each day
- **Floating** where the support is provided wherever the client happens to be living. In this situation the worker might work out of an office base but be largely out in the community visiting clients

Supported housing might be provided by councils, housing associations, charities or voluntary groups. Providers might be very small and local or large regional or national organisations which also provide housing without support (usually called 'general needs').

Supported housing services meet a wide range of people's needs including older people, people experiencing domestic abuse, homeless people, people who have learning disabilities, people with an offending past, young care leavers, people who have mental illness and those who abuse drugs and alcohol. Some people might fall into more than one category and they are usually described as having 'complex needs'.

The overall aim of supported housing is to help people to live as independently, safely and happily as possible.

What does a supported housing worker do?

Working in supported housing might involve any of the following things:

- Processing and prioritising applications or referrals for supported housing services
- Assessing the needs of new clients and developing support plans
- If accommodation-based: checking for and reporting repairs, carrying out building safety checks, signing-up new residents and helping them to settle in, collecting rent and service charges and so on
- Visiting floating support clients in their homes or other settings such as cafés
- Protecting people from abuse and harm - known as 'safeguarding'
- Building and maintaining links with a range of statutory and voluntary services such as social care, health, probation, housing providers (if your client needs to move on) and advice services
- Liaising with agencies on clients' behalf or supporting them to do it themselves
- Going with clients to appointments
- Attending case conferences where your clients' needs are being discussed
- Helping clients to claim benefits and access services
- Advocating on clients' behalf where appropriate and necessary
- Helping clients to develop living skills such as budgeting, shopping, cleaning, cooking – or referring them to agencies that provide this
- Helping clients to find and move on to more settled accommodation
- Organising social activities and trips
- Maintaining comprehensive records of interaction with clients



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What qualifications are you likely to need?

Some organisations would look for someone who has, or is studying for, a housing qualification when they are recruiting supported housing workers or they might expect you to do a qualification once you've started the job. You can find out everything you need to know about housing qualifications [here](#).

What skills and experience might you need?

- Some housing experience although employers are often keen to recruit people with the right attitude and train them on the technical things they need to know
- Some experience of working in a social care setting
- Knowledge of adult safeguarding procedures
- Experience of working with people - and feeling comfortable doing so
- Good communication skills - listening as well as speaking!
- Empathy and a willingness to see other peoples' points of view
- Ability to work with vulnerable people with complex needs in challenging circumstances in a non-judgemental way
- Understanding of ethical and professional boundaries
- Ability to keep calm in a crisis
- Good problem solving skills
- Ability to work on your own initiative, manage your own time and balance competing priorities
- Good IT skills