**Scottish Government secondment – Homelessness policy officer**

**Details of post:**

* Full time post (37 hours).
* Two-year post with an expected start date of 2 August 2021.
* The post holder can either work from Atlantic Quay 4 in Glasgow or Victoria Quay in Edinburgh, although there will be an element of working from home and occasional travel between the two cities.

**Terms and conditions, including salary:**

* This is a secondment to Scottish Government from your current employer and at your current rate of pay and existing terms and conditions.
* Alternatively, if you do not have an organisation to second you, you will be employed by Homeless Network Scotland and seconded to Scottish Government. Please contact Homeless Network Scotland for terms and conditions, including salary details.

**Job profile:**

The ambition to end homelessness and rough sleeping is a priority for the Scottish Government. It is important that the work the government does responds to the experiences of people who are or have been homeless so that it delivers real change and improvement.

This secondment provides an exciting opportunity for the post holder to influence policy and strategy at a national level to help bring about an end to homelessness in Scotland. The post holder will be part of the Homelessness Unit and work with colleagues across the unit and with the [Change Team](https://homelessnetwork.scot/change-team/) to deliver commitments in the [Ending Homelessness Together action plan](https://www.gov.scot/publications/ending-homelessness-together-updated-action-plan-october-2020/), such as preventing homelessness from happening in the first place, improving temporary accommodation standards, supporting the shift to rapid rehousing and understanding housing affordability.

The post holder’s main duties are to work as part of a team that supports and advises ministers to deliver on their ambitions to prevent and end homelessness. This will involve drafting ministerial briefing, considering the best available evidence, and building strong relationships with internal government colleagues and professionals in the housing and homelessness sector. The post holder will have an important role to play in helping Scottish Government policy officials understand the needs and perspectives of people who are or have been homeless to better inform policy development and improve practice.

The secondee will be supported to act as a critical friend to the Scottish Government, challenging assumptions and biases, promoting a person-centred approach to policy design, adding insight on how policies and processes might work on the ground and highlighting any unintentional impacts.

The Homelessness Unit takes pride in developing its staff and providing a supportive environment. There will be opportunities for the post holder to learn how government works and to develop new skills and experiences.

**Key Competencies**

Performance Competencies:

* High standard of written and spoken communication
* Well connected with strong networking skills
* Work well as part of a team
* Excellent IT skills

Behavioural Competencies:

* Open and approachable
* Passionate

*Reasons why the above competencies are important to the post:*

The post holder has a unique opportunity to influence and shape policy development at its heart; therefore, they must be confident in speaking up and making their views heard to maximise their impact. Being able to write well and passionately about the areas for development and improvement is required to create a persuasive argument for change. Being open, approachable and receptive to the experiences of others is important, as is being a team player.

The secondee will support the work of the Change Team to ensure the voices of people experiencing homelessness are heard. They will also provide officials and services with feedback and constructive criticism on proposed and existing policies and practice.

**Desirable Competencies**

Performance Competencies:

* Ability to work on own initiative as well as part of a team

Behavioural Competencies:

* Highly motivated
* A willingness to listen and learn

**Essential Criteria**

* Lived experience of homelessness.
* Knowledge or experience of the housing system in at least one Scottish local authority, including a basic awareness of the homelessness assessment process from start to finish.
* A basic understanding of the benefits system, the way in which housing benefit interacts with other benefits and the impact this can have on claimants.

**Desirable Criteria**

* Some professional experience working in housing or homelessness services.
* An understanding of the factors that can contribute to homelessness.
* An awareness of the various tenures on offer in Scotland, and preferably direct experience of the social rented sector (local authority or housing association) or private rented sector.
* An understanding of the evictions process in Scotland, including the rights of tenants and landlords.
* Awareness of the importance of affordable housing.

**Further information about the organisation**

The Homelessness Unit is part of the Better Homes Division which sits in the Housing and Social Justice Directorate of the Scottish Government. It is made up of over 20 people across five teams, overseen by a unit head, deputy director and director, with offices in both Edinburgh (Victoria Quay) and Glasgow (Atlantic Quay).

The Homelessness Unit is responsible for improving policy responses to homelessness across Scotland and for delivery against the commitments set out in the updated Ending Homelessness Together action plan. This is done through briefing and advice to ministers, consultation and engagement, for example, through regular meetings with stakeholder groups, local authorities and other organisations with an interest in homelessness.

**Details of how to apply**

For further information about the post, please contact Janice Higgins at Homeless Network Scotland on 0141 420 7272 or email at JHiggins@homelessnetwork.scot. Please email completed applications to Janice by 4pm on Sunday 20 June 2021.

**What happens next?**

Applications will be shortlisted on Wednesday 23 June 2021. If you have not heard from us by Friday 25 June, please assume that you have not been shortlisted this time. As the requirements for every post are different, please do not let that put you off applying to work with us in the future.

If you are invited to interview, these will be held on Wednesday 30 June 2021 using video call.