



## Brent Irish Advisory Service

### JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Title:</b>	Housing Advice Caseworker
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Director/Advice Manager
<b>Hours:</b>	21 Hours per week
<b>Salary:</b>	£30,000-32,000 pro rata..
<b>Based:</b>	379-381 High Road, Willesden, NW10 2JR + other locations required for service delivery within the London borough of Brent. Flexibility to work from home
<b>Contract:</b>	3 years with possibility of extension subject to funding
<b>Please Note:</b>	Enhanced DBS is required for this role

### **JOB PURPOSE**

BIAS has supported London's largest Irish Community in Brent and North London for over forty years. We deliver our support through our welfare advice drop-in service and through our Active Ageing Thursday Club.

In the last few years, we have seen a significant increase in the number of people turning to us for housing advice. We are seeking a passionate and knowledgeable Housing Advice Caseworker to join our small team to provide this additional expertise. Your role will involve contributing to running of day-to-day services alongside advice staff and providing specialist housing advice and knowledge. Key to your role will be providing one-to-one appointments on complex housing issues, including homelessness, tenancy sustainment, disrepair and issues that fall outside of legal aid support.

You will need to have strong people skills (working with staff, volunteers and clients), excellent organisational skills and ability to digest complex briefs. You will be required to manage an active caseload ensuring cases are appropriately actioned and recorded while ensuring tasks and deadlines are consistently achieved. This role is subject to funding and is reviewed on an annual basis.

You will need to be confident in all areas of housing law, particularly those relating to single people and older people. You should have knowledge of the housing needs of those living in inner and outer London boroughs and the particular challenges they face. You will be able to advocate for clients on issues of suitability, disrepair and housing transfers for clients who may be in private rented accommodation, social

housing or are owner-occupiers. You should also have at least a working understanding of other areas that our clients enquire about, including welfare benefits, pensions, employment and debt issues. The ideal candidate will have experience of working will have experience of representing clients in court proceedings.

### **KEY WORK AREAS AND MAIN DUTIES**

- Provide appropriate advice, information and where necessary, practical help, to enquirers whether by visit, telephone, letter or email and where necessary, to advocate on behalf of clients in the appropriate forums.
- Ensure that all casework records are kept up-to-date, accessible to other staff and that all local casework information systems are maintained effectively.
- Contribute to the delivery of advice services ensuring that appropriate advice and support is provided and casework deadlines are met.
- Contribute to monitoring service delivery, recording outcomes and ensuring efficient allocation of resources. Signpost clients to other services as and when necessary.
- Work with the management as required on operational matters including the planning and future direction.
- Have the ability to manage complex caseload, providing appropriate interventions and client support in preparation of court hearings or appeals.
- Engage positively and constructively with other services, including local authorities and RSL's, where it is in the best interest of our users and maintain good local relationships in line with agreed partnership protocols.
- Identify opportunities to effect positive change to housing policy in North West London and to pursue such opportunities in liaison with the Advice Manager and other staff.

### **GENERAL**

- Maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries at all times.
- Maintain accurate and appropriate records of all client work as needed.
- Provide cover during annual leave or staff sickness for all projects (week days, occasional evening/weekend work).
- To carry out administrative tasks associated with the duties of the post and other duties as required by the Director and Advice Manager.
- Attend regular reviews and supervision.
- Willing to undertake training and professional development as required.
- Work within agreed budgets.
- Maintain an awareness of policy changes and good practice.
- Maintain and develop community information resources.

### **DIVERSITY & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- Ensure compliance with the organisation's equal opportunities policy and actively promote equal opportunities and diversity within your role.

## VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

- To actively encourage volunteers in the delivery of projects and services and to contribute to a supportive environment.

These are the normal duties which the employer will require from you at the date of your employment. However, it is necessary for all staff to be flexible in this respect and all employees may be required from time to time to perform other duties which are required for the efficient running of the organisation.

### PERSON SPECIFICATION

This lists the skills, experience, knowledge, and abilities needed for this post.

Please make sure that you refer to these in your supporting statement.

A=Application I = Interview

### PERSON SPECIFICATION – Outreach Advice Worker

Essential criteria	Method of assessment
A minimum of two years experience in a community or statutory setting preferably in an advice setting supporting vulnerable people.	A
Evidence of ongoing professional development and up-to-date knowledge of housing law and housing-related benefits.	A
Ability to manage an active casework providing appropriate support on a range of areas	A/I
Excellent verbal and written communication skills. Ability to communicate effectively at all levels and to build good working relationships.	I
Excellent organisational skills and experience of working to deadlines whilst coping with competing priorities and ensuring case work deadline are met.	A/I
IT - Good knowledge of IT packages such as Office 365	A / I
Demonstrable understanding of Advice Quality standards and contributing to maintain AQS.	A / I
The ability to demonstrate patience, understanding and empathy to staff, clients, family members and volunteers.	A / I
Ability to carry out day-to-day tasks and manage own workload with minimum supervision.	I
Willingness to undertake and gain necessary qualifications in relation to specific areas of advice.	A
Experience of working co-operatively and effectively as part of a team as well as using personal initiative.	A / I
Commitment to and championing of equality and diversity	A/I
An understanding and awareness of the needs of the Irish Community and statutory and voluntary sector provision available	A/I

Ability to negotiate for clients in on complex issues to reach a good outcome	A
Ability to create positive and long-standing relationships with stakeholders, including community leaders and organisations, local authorities and others	A/I
Desirable criteria	
Experience of working on complex housing cases, including up to court hearings	A/I

NB: We are unable to accept any applications other than by our application form.  
Applications should be emailed to [info@biasbrent.co.uk](mailto:info@biasbrent.co.uk)