# East Herts Logo JOB DESCRIPTION

This form summarises the purpose of the job and lists its key tasks. It may be varied from time to time at the discretion of the Authority, in consultation with the postholder.

Job title Assistant Planning Officer  
Reports to Service Manager for Development Management

Team Development Management  
Grade Grade 4 - 6  
Last updated 23 August 2022

## Job Summary

This post operates as an introductory career development role in the planning service area. Post holders will be assigned tasks across the development management and planning policy service areas in accordance with service needs.

Following appropriate training and with continuing guidance and support post holders will provide the initial point of professional assistance to customers regarding development management and planning policy matters. The full range of tasks will be agreed with managers and in line with identified training needs. However, these are likely to include dealing with pre and post application submissions regarding householder and other small scale development proposals, providing initial advice to customers through the service arrangements in place, both in person and by phone or any other means as appropriate. The post will provide a proactive and helpful first contact with the service for all customers.

The post holder will also support, assist and deliver specific projects in relation to the planning policy service area as appropriate.

## Key Tasks

### Operational Responsibilities

• Be responsible for the provision of initial advice to customers in person or by e-mail/phone. Accurate record keeping in relation to this and the provision of consistent and professional advice. Assessment of the appropriate next stage in relation to each enquiry.

• At entry level, and following appropriate training, the post holder would have a case load of straight forward pre-application householder, other and small minor planning submissions. They would assess and make professional recommendations in accordance with the Council’s planning policies and service procedures under the direction of senior Officers.

• At level two the caseload would include cases with increased scope and complexity. The post holder would still receive guidance and direction as necessary from senior officers but would be in a position to reach recommendations on the straight forward cases without guidance.

• Other development management research and support tasks, associated with more complex cases being undertaken by other officers, would be assigned to the post holder.

• At level three, the post holder would have a case load of pre-application householder, other and small minor planning applications. In most cases, they would be making a recommendation on these with minimal supervision. They would also have a small case load of planning applications and would be dealing with these under supervision.

• The post holder would also be assigned tasks associated with more complex minor and major applications to support other officers.

• The postholder would deal with a case load of other development management work and other project work as agreed between the post holder and managers.

• To undertake training where necessary (including to achieve post graduate qualification) to ensure that the above tasks can be undertaken successfully and to maintain professional knowledge.

• At each level the post holder would be assigned their own caseload of planning policy project work, or would support and assist as appropriate more senior staff, in the delivery of their project work.

• Post holders will be expected to display the council’s values and behaviours, looking to support, assist and improve the delivery of the service to customers. Where post holders enter the service without a post graduate qualification they will be expected to pursue an appropriate course of study, supported by the Council.

### Management / Supervisory / Team Working Responsibilities

* To work as part of a team to ensure availability of Development Management and Planning Policy services to customers. Post holders are expected to operate as a team, supporting each other to deliver an effective service to customers.
* Assist as part of a project team on planning applications and other project work, when required
* Contribute to Corporate Strategic and Service Plans projects.

### Communication & Contacts

* There will be significant contact with customers of the service in this role. Post holders will be expected to deal with all communications and contacts in a positive and proactive way, seeking to meet customer needs by direct service provision or by clear hand on to other service areas or senior officers. It will be necessary for post holders to be confident and proactive in dealing with customer matters.
* Post holders will be expected to engage fully and proactively with the Council’s employment development and learning and management programmes, including the Performance Development Review (PDR) process or any future replacement of it. They will be expected to take part in regular meetings with managers as relevant to ensure that performance and service delivery standards are established, understood and met.
* Post holders will come into contact with a wide range of customers. They are expected to display the values and behaviours of the Council in all contacts (including being politically aware), ensuring the delivery of a high quality and respected service. Contacts should be dealt with proactively, seeking to maximise the benefits that can be delivered by the service in co-operation with customers.
* Contacts will include applicants, third parties affected by development, community, residents and special interest groups, council members (including the Leader and other Executive Members), other elected representatives, landowner and developer interests, service and infrastructure delivery providers, internal customers including colleagues throughout the council, service managers, directors, other senior managers, chief executive.
* Ensure awareness of the council’s Safeguarding Policy and take a proactive approach to ensure the safeguarding of residents at all times.

### Service Delivery

* Post holders are working to ensure the delivery of an effective, high quality and respected service to customers. They will display the values and behaviours of the Council and will work to ensure the delivery of a proactive service in accordance with quality indicators and an agreed work programme. They will seek to ensure continuous self-improvement and to support, assist and deliver improvements to the quality and delivery of the service.
* Post holders will be expected to maintain awareness of new legislation and other matters affecting planning issues and keep abreast of current trends in all aspects of their work
* Lead role in acting as a customer service officer providing the first point of professional advice on planning matters.
* Ensure that all performance targets relating to Development Management are met.
* Ensure established standards of customer care are maintained.
* Attend training courses relevant to post.

# East Herts Logo

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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We want the postholder to be able to demonstrate the following competencies to a high level and want to use these to the full in their work. This is more important than having a great deal of direct experience of the job content, and we will be looking for evidence of all the following key competencies during the selection process, if you are shortlisted.

* Personal effectiveness
* Proactive
* Managing relationships
* Communication
* Customer focus

## Key Criteria

### Qualifications and Experience

* This is a career graded post – the post holder can be advanced through the grades when they achieve the minimum requirements for each grade as outlined in the job description.
* At 4 the postholder would require a good standard of general secondary education including GCSE qualifications in Maths & English and a minimum of 2A/AS levels or equivalent.
* To be able to progress to (or be appointed at) 5, the postholder would (in addition to the above) need to have gained experience relevant to the role as outlined in the job description.
* Whilst a planning or related degree (geography, environmental sciences, etc.) is not essential at Grades 4/5, postholders will be encouraged to commence a degree course and the council may fund it subject to funds being available.
* To be able to progress to (or be appointed at) 6, the postholder would (in addition to the above) be expected to have completed a planning or related degree course (geography, environmental sciences, etc.)

### Skills and abilities

* Basic understanding/knowledge of town planning legislation and of the development management process.
* Ability to interpret plans and a good understanding of issues relevant to the post.
* Computer competent.
* Excellent verbal and written communication skills.

### Communication

* Able to grasp information quickly.
* Ability to express concepts, facts and arguments clearly both verbally and in writing.
* Ability to deal constructively with customers face to face, in writing and over the telephone regarding problems and advice.
* Ability to work constructively and proactively with public and other service customers, local organisations, community groups, business and voluntary organisations.
* Ability to demonstrate an understanding of customer care issues and willing to work proactively to ensure that good customer service standards are delivered.
* Understanding of and commitment to effective levels of customer service.

### Other

* Enthusiastic and flexible approach to work.
* Willingness to participate constructively in team meetings and briefings.
* Ability to work constructively and proactively with public and other service customers, local organisations, community groups, business and voluntary organisations.
* Ability to demonstrate an understanding of customer care issues and willing to work proactively to ensure that good customer service standards are delivered.