

Positive Action Training in Housing

“Positive Action” covers a range of measures which employers are permitted to put in place to address disadvantage experienced by people who share a protected characteristic (e.g. Race, Disability, Sex and many others); for example allowing employers to train employees from an under-represented ethnic group to enable them to develop the skills necessary for a particular type of work.

PATH (Scotland) aims to provide training opportunities to people from BME communities in an effort to address past and current labour market disadvantages.

Since 1998 PATH (Scotland) has worked with housing organisations across Scotland to provide high quality training programmes geared to the needs of BME communities. Housing trainees are supported through a 36 month work placement and academic course, as well as receiving additional specialist training.



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PATH (Scotland)

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A Career in Housing



In 2008, there were almost 243,000 people employed in housing and housing management within the UK and over 20,000 based in Scotland ⁽¹⁾. Most of these work for local authorities and registered social landlords. However, housing jobs can also be found with housing trusts, co-operatives, voluntary organisations, the private sector and commercial bodies and in other public service departments such as social services and health authorities.

What is Housing Work?

It takes many forms, from giving advice to homeless people on how they can go about getting a house, giving advice on welfare rights, to collecting rents, assessing repairs on a house, allocating houses to tenants and all the functions needed to run a multi-million pound organisation responsible for thousands of houses in one area. The work will vary depending upon the particular functions of the housing organisation, its size and location. Housing stock and social conditions vary from one city to another and between urban and rural areas, which affects the nature of housing work.

There have been many changes in the housing sector over the last few years – growing owner occupation, the rise in

homelessness and repossessions, the increasing importance of registered social landlords, and a recognition that housing professionals need to work with other public services to regenerate the communities in which people live.

If you choose to work in housing, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your contribution really matters, because everyone needs somewhere decent to live. This is why many people are attracted to housing work from other fields, as well as when starting a career. The work is not easy and often challenging, but the rewards in terms of fulfilment are high.

What Type of People Work in Housing?

All kinds! But you are most likely to be suited to the work if you have the following skills and attributes.

An interest in people's living conditions; strong communication and negotiation skills; organisational skills; flexibility and adaptability to a variety of different situations; ability to work on your own initiative and under pressure; a desire to take on responsibility; an interest in developing new skills; an understanding of people from diverse cultural backgrounds and with different needs.

What Types of Housing Work are Available?

For those who enjoy contact with a cross-section of the public, there are many opportunities in the 'frontline' of housing, dealing directly with tenants, their needs and their options. You could be involved in managing an advice centre, helping the public with matters arising from housing legislation, landlord and tenant relationships or rents; or advising tenants on their welfare rights.

Your responsibilities could affect all sorts of initiatives from small sheltered housing schemes to large estates, from special needs housing to everyday maintenance of the housing service. Most importantly, your work could have a direct and beneficial effect on people and their standard of living.

However, there are many roles within housing and you can choose to specialise in housing law, housing finance or organisational management.

(1) Source: Annual Population Survey, Housing Labour Market Intelligence Update, Asset Skills, 2008