

# POWER UP YOUR CAREER IN HOUSING



Super charge your skills in  
Scotland's housing sector

**sfha**

Scottish Federation of  
Housing Associations

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# WHAT IS A HOUSING ASSOCIATION?

A housing association is a not-for-profit organisation which is set up to provide affordable housing and support local communities. They play a crucial role in addressing housing shortages and their primary goal is to provide housing for those in need rather than generating profits.

Housing associations are often seen as 'more than a landlord' as they provide a range of community support services and are driven by a strong sense of social responsibility and community engagement.



# LAUNCH YOUR CAREER IN HOUSING AND SUPER CHARGE YOUR SKILLS

**The social housing sector is a great place to power up your skills and knowledge all whilst making a difference to people's lives.**

There are numerous opportunities and There are numerous routes within a housing association, ensuring there's a role for everyone - enough options that you can experience to discover where you have most interest.

Whether your interests lean towards administration, maintenance, community outreach, or IT and digital; there's a role tailored to match your skills and passions. Explore the many career paths available and discover where your talents can shine within the sector.



# FIND REAL PURPOSE AND INFLUENCE IMPROVEMENT IN PEOPLE'S LIVES!

More than ever, housing associations play a vital role in shaping communities and enhancing quality of life. Professionals of the housing sector are presented with the unique opportunity to fuse passion with purpose, as they work towards creating sustainable and inclusive communities. A real life influencer!

## **Power up your skills and knowledge** **> Through training, development** **and career progression**

Working in the housing sector presents great opportunity for personal and professional growth. Employees often have access to training programmes specifically designed to enhance their skills and knowledge and additionally, the sector prioritises career development, providing pathways for employees to progress.

## **Boost your positive social impact** **on communities**

One of the most rewarding aspects of working in the housing sector is the opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of individuals and communities. This feeling of making a difference and helping others adds an important aspect to the job, making you feel happy and proud of what you're doing for society.



- **Caitlin Gillespie,**  
Assistant Housing Officer

Caitlin started her career in retail but felt she wanted to help others and make a difference to communities and so after chatting to a friend, applied for a job as Housing Assistant at a housing association. Her previous experience, including her customer service skills, were relevant to the role and within a year was promoted to Assistant Housing Officer. She feels she has had a positive impact on the community in her short time working in the sector and enjoys the feeling of success when signing new tenants up for a property and seeing the excitement on their faces as they start to plan their future in their new home.

“ **If you are thinking about a career in housing, go for it! No two days are the same and I learn something new every day** ”



# CHARGE UP YOUR EXPERIENCE!

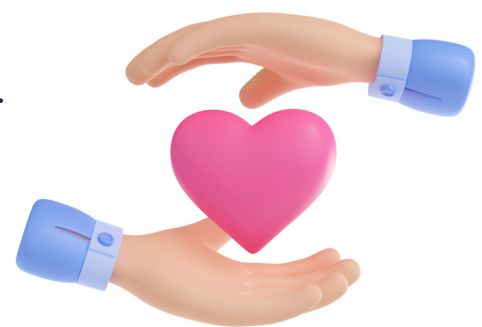
There is a wide range of roles to choose from in the housing sector, suiting people with different interests, skills and backgrounds. Whether you are into managing properties, engaging with people, building homes, handling finances, digital and technology or sustainability and climate change, there's a job that matches your strengths and passions. This variety lets you explore different paths within the sector, keeping work exciting and giving you the opportunity to try new things.

## Enjoy a healthy work-life balance

Many housing organisations understand the importance of balancing work with personal life and offer flexible schedules, options to work from home, and generous leave policies. A supportive work environment that values your well-being can lead to greater satisfaction and happiness in your job.

## Competitive and transparent salary

In the housing sector, salaries are usually competitive and based on your skills, experience, and responsibilities. Many housing associations are open about how they determine salaries, which promotes fairness and trust among employees. Knowing that your pay is aligned with industry standards gives you peace of mind.



## Power in stability

There will always be a need for affordable housing which means the housing sector offers more job security compared to other sectors. Whether the economy is up or down, there's always a need for professionals to manage, maintain, and improve housing and community resources.

# DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ROUTES TO BEGIN A HOUSING CAREER

There are lots of ways to begin your path into the housing sector. You can enter the sector at any stage of your career with an abundance of skills, qualifications and interests. Below are just some of the ways to begin your journey into the sector and ignite your career.

## **Ignite your learning and experience with an apprenticeship!**

An apprenticeship is a fantastic way to boost your experience and knowledge all whilst earning a wage. An apprenticeship will allow you to gain practical experience within an organisation whilst working towards a qualification.

Apprenticeships usually take around one-five years depending on the type.



## Modern apprenticeships

If you have finished school and don't think college or university is for you, then a modern apprenticeship may be for you. There are over 100 different modern apprenticeship learning frameworks, and your employer will choose the framework most applicable to your job role that you were hired for.

## Graduate apprenticeships

If you fancy studying towards an undergraduate or masters degree, a graduate apprenticeship is the path for you. Typically, graduate apprenticeships will spend 80% of their time in the workplace and 20% in higher education.



## Foundation apprenticeships

If you are still in school and want to gain work experience whilst in your senior phase at school, then a foundation apprenticeship is ideal for you. Participants split their time between school and either college or an employer, completing the Foundation Apprenticeship alongside their other academic subjects, such as National 5s and Highers and will typically be in the workplace one day per week and completion leads to a qualification at the same level of learning as a Higher SCQF Level 6.

Foundation apprenticeships can lead to gaining full time employment or, as foundation apprenticeships are recognised as entry qualifications, a place at college or university.

## Trades apprenticeships

If you prefer more practical, hands on work then you may be best suited to a trades apprenticeship. During your trades apprenticeship, you will work under the guidance of experienced professionals in your chosen trade. Common trade apprenticeships offered within the housing sector include plumbing, joinery or electrical work.





## Revitalise your knowledge with a graduate scheme

If you plan to go to university or are currently studying at university and are thinking about your next steps after graduation, why not consider a graduate scheme? A graduate scheme is a structured training and development initiative, typically offered by employers to recent university graduates.

Graduate schemes usually include a combination of on the job training, rotations through different departments or projects and mentorship. They will allow you to amplify your skills and knowledge gained from your degree and help you put theory into practice.



## Traineeships

Traineeships are typically targeted at individuals who have just left education and are typically entry-level positions or for those looking to develop skills in a particular field. A traineeship is a structured learning program designed to provide individuals with hands-on work experience and vocational skills in a specific industry or job role and often involve a combination of classroom-based instruction, on-the-job training, and practical work experience.

Upon completion of a traineeship, participants may receive a formal qualification, certification, or recognition of their newly acquired skills.

## Careers fairs & advisors

Are you feeling a bit deflated because everyone else seems to know what they want to do when they leave school? You are not alone! Speak to your careers advisor or visit careers fairs and see what types of roles are out there that cater to your passions and interests! You will be able to speak to people working within the industry and find out the different career paths or qualifications and experience needed to power up your own career!

## Boost your skills with work experience

The best way to find out what you enjoy is to carry out work experience! This may be offered through various initiatives through your school or why not find your local housing association and contact them for any opportunities that you could carry out in your spare time?

## Apply, apply, apply!

You may decide that further study isn't for you and you want to begin your career in an entry level role. There are plenty of roles within the housing sector that you can walk into straight from school. You might have a part time role during your studies that the skills can be transferable from.

Or you may have completed your further education and are looking to get stuck into your first role. Again, there are various specialised roles that relate to your field of study that you can apply to.

A lot of housing associations are looking for individuals with a good attitude and similar values to learn and progress within their organisation! There are also an abundance of short term training courses that will continue your development and supercharge your knowledge such as EVH and CIH courses.





- **Liam McGuckin**,  
Sustainability Coordinator

Liam has had an extensive career to date having worked abroad in Australia, India and Guatemala.

- Liam gained a degree in Psychology then a Masters in Environmental Sustainability
- He found a desire to help others and the wider environment
- He joined the GEM Programme with a housing association
- Liam enjoys the variety – he can be working with tenants one day on home energy issues and the next day delivering a presentation to local authorities on sustainability.

“ **Open yourself up to as many new opportunities as you can and reach out to those who are already doing the type of work you like** ”



# READY TO POWER UP IN THE HOUSING SECTOR?

## Next steps

So are you ready to 'power up' your career in housing? Whether it be an apprenticeship, traineeship or graduate scheme, or maybe you are looking to go straight into the world of work; check out the opportunities in your area and start applying for a role that suits you! Here are some helpful tips on how to secure your first role and start your very own professional journey into the world of housing...

## Interview tips

- Research the company and their values
- Prepare for common questions
- Ensure you understand the job description and be prepared to explain how your skills and experience match the requirement. Remember experiences and skills can be transferrable!
- Use the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method to structure responses
- Show enthusiasm
- Have some questions about the role to ask the interviewers
- Plan your route in advance and leave in plenty of time
- Be yourself!

## Resources

- <https://yourcareerinhousing.scot>
- <https://apprenticeships.scot/>
- <https://www.sfha.co.uk/jobs-online>
- <https://www.evh.org.uk/>
- <https://goodmoves.org/>

**SUPER  
CHARGED**



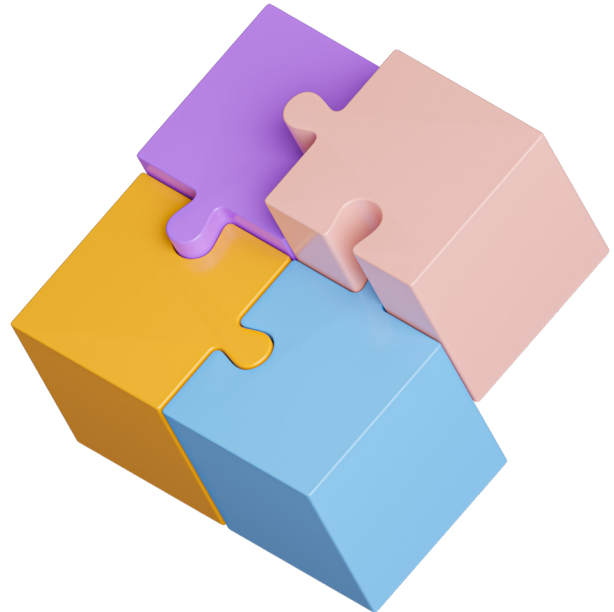
**SELECTION  
OF ROLES TO  
DISCOVER\***

## Housing management/ tenancy sustainment

**Ensuring people's homes are safe and warm!** Working within the housing management department you would be responsible for managing housing units and responsible for allocation properties, maintaining and inspecting properties, addressing tenants issues and complaints, rent collection and compliance with tenancy agreements and tenancy sustainment.

### Super skills:

- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Organisational skills
- ✓ Customer service



## Corporate/ business services

**Organisational superhero working with people!** The corporate services department is responsible for business support functions including financial management, human resources, legal compliance and governance, data management and administrative tasks.

### Super skills:

- ✓ Customer service
- ✓ Organisational skills
- ✓ Attention to detail
- ✓ IT skills
- ✓ Time management

## Finance

**A super star with budgets and money.** The finance department oversee and manage the financial aspects of the organisation which includes budgeting, financial reporting, sourcing funding and compliance with financial regulations.

### Super skills:

- ✓ Numeracy skills
- ✓ Analytical skills
- ✓ Attention to detail
- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Accuracy



## Tenant engagement & communications

**Top banana with super multi-communication.** Those who work in tenant engagement and communications manage communication both internally and externally to ensure the organisations messages, activities and initiatives are effectively conveyed to stakeholders. Additionally, they actively engage with tenants to ensure that their needs and concerns are addressed effectively.

### Super skills:

- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Interpersonal skills
- ✓ Adaptability

## Development of homes

**Plan and build new amazing and modern homes.** Those who work in development will oversee housing development projects and is responsible for assessing the viability of potential projects, securing funding and permits and collaborating with various stakeholders to ensure successful housing development initiatives.

### Super skills:

- ✓ **Project management**
- ✓ **Problem solving**
- ✓ **Negotiation skills**
- ✓ **Communication skills**
- ✓ **Analytical skills**



## IT & digital

**Agile digital ninja's and savvy IT guru's.** The IT and digital department is responsible for managing and optimising the organisations information technology infrastructure and oversees the implementation of digital solutions and software and ensuring data security, maintain hardware and software systems.

### Super skills:

- ✓ **IT skills**
- ✓ **Analytical skills**
- ✓ **Data management**
- ✓ **Attention to detail**
- ✓ **Problem solving**





## Property repairs/ asset management

**Be the bricks and mortar that support the sector.** This department oversees and maintains the organisations property portfolio. They coordinate repairs and renovations and manage tenant relations. It is the glue mortar that holds together every housing associations biggest assets.

### Super skills:

- ✓ **Communication skills**
- ✓ **Attention to detail**
- ✓ **Negotiation skills**
- ✓ **Organisational skills**



## Energy, sustainability, and climate change

**Energise and empower the organisation.** Responsible for promoting energy efficiency and environmentally responsible practices to tenants and for the organisation.

### Super skills:

- ✓ **Adaptability**
- ✓ **Creativity**
- ✓ **Innovative**





## Contact

For more information please contact Mollie Stephen, lead of the Routes to Housing project at SFHA on [mstephen@sfha.co.uk](mailto:mstephen@sfha.co.uk)



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