



VACANCY INFORMATION PACK

Post No: SC689

Job Title: Housing Law Caseworker – Cardiff,
Vale and Valleys

Dear Candidate,

It is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you as you think about joining our organisation.

Shelter Cymru is an independent Welsh charity (i.e. not part of Shelter England/ Scotland); founded on the belief that everyone in Wales has the right to a decent, secure home.

Since 1981, Shelter Cymru has helped more than half a million people fight for their rights, get back on their feet and find and keep a home. We also tackle the root causes of homelessness by campaigning for new laws, policies and solutions.

Last year, Shelter Cymru helped nearly 20,000 people who were struggling with bad housing or homelessness through free, independent, expert housing and legal advice on the phone, online and face to face.

At Shelter Cymru, we face a very real challenge; we need to raise more money if we are to help everyone in Wales who need us – both now and in the future. We need to develop more services to support more people and we also want more people to support us through campaigning, volunteering and donating.

Everyone in Shelter Cymru, whatever they do, contributes to these aims.

And you too can make a difference.

If you feel passionate about helping us to end homelessness in Wales and have the skills we're looking for, we'd love to hear from you.

Thank you for your interest in this role.

With best wishes,



Ruth Power
Chief Executive Officer

If this vacancy is not for you, why not join us as a volunteer? Find out about current opportunities and how to get involved by visiting www.sheltercymru.org.uk/volunteer

Role Description

Job Title: Housing Law Caseworker (Cardiff, Vale and Valleys)

Reports to: Team Leader (Cardiff, Vale and Valleys)

Salary: £26,862 per annum (pro rata) - £24,560pa

Location: Cardiff

Hours: 32 hours per week

Post No: SC689

Background to our organisation

Shelter Cymru is the people and homes charity in Wales and works for the prevention of homelessness, the improvement of housing conditions, and the right of everyone to a safe, suitable and affordable home.

We understand the damage that bad housing causes. Every day we deal with the effect it has on people's lives.

Shelter Cymru's 2025 Vision

Shelter Cymru has an ambitious vision that by 2025 the organisation will:

- **Help more people to find long term solutions.** We want to help more people experiencing or facing homelessness, or living in unsuitable homes, to find long term solutions to the problems they face
- **Fight for good homes.** Our policy, research, campaigning and lobbying will focus on structural drivers of need, evidenced by our casework, and underpinned by recognition of home as the foundation of people's personal, social and economic lives and their health and wellbeing
- **Build our resilience and capacity.** We want to build a resilient and sustainable organisation that is continually learning and adapting to a changing environment; where our staff, and the people we exist to serve, feel valued and empowered.

Background to the post

As a Housing Law Caseworker you will be part of a team who provide a National Housing Advice Service through a mixture of centre, court and surgery based services.

The delivery and development of National Housing Advice services is one of the primary means by which Shelter Cymru fulfils its aims and objectives of preventing homelessness and improving bad housing conditions. You will be expected to make a significant contribution to the successful delivery and development of these services.

The main activities of the team are:

- The delivery of high quality and cost effective national housing advice and advocacy services to people in housing need.
- The development and promotion of our services to potential partners and funders.
- To work in a collaborative and constructive way with other services, local authorities and RSLs in the best interest of our users.
- The identification and promotion of housing policy initiatives
- The promotion of best practice in housing policy and management through the provision of training and other information channels.

You will deliver advice surgeries, court duty sessions and other advice services as required across the Cardiff, Vale and Valleys region. Delivery venues may vary as operational requirements dictate.

Job summary/purpose

To deliver and develop high quality, cost effective housing rights advice and advocacy services to people in housing need with a focus on preventing homelessness where applicable and improving peoples' housing conditions. Also to contribute to the promotion of housing policy initiatives and best practice and to work in a constructive and collaborative way with other services, including local authorities and housing associations when it is in the best interest of our users.

Key responsibilities

- 1.1 Provide appropriate advice, information and where necessary, practical help, to enquirers whether by visit, telephone, dedicated telephone and online service, letter or email and where necessary, to advocate on behalf of clients in the appropriate forums.
- 1.2 Provide flexible cover, as appropriate for advice sessions, including court duty across a number of local authority areas.
- 1.3 Ensure that all casework records are kept up-to-date, accessible to other staff and that all local casework information systems are maintained effectively.
- 1.4 Identify all cases that qualify for legal aid and ensure that the necessary procedures are followed and recording systems maintained.
- 1.5 Actively participate in file review meetings and all other evaluation structures designed to maintain and improve the quality and standards of casework provision.
- 1.6 Identify opportunities to effect positive change to housing policy in Wales and pursue such opportunities in liaison with the line manager and other staff.
- 1.7 Engage positively and constructively with other services, including local authorities and housing associations, where it is in the best interest of our users and maintain good local relationships in line with agreed partnership protocols.
- 1.8 Participate in policy meetings and ensure that work in progress is communicated to other relevant staff.

- 1.9 Assist in the development and implementation of strategies to promote the housing rights service to other agencies and potential funders.
- 1.10 Assist in the development of team workplans, within the overall planning procedure, and to be responsible for individual performance against agreed team objectives.
- 1.11 Participate in policy conferences, seminars and events and to respond to requests for information from the media in consultation with the line manager and other relevant staff
- 1.12 Make a contribution to the public training programme and to undertake speaking engagements with outside groups as agreed with the line manager.
- 1.13 Identify opportunities to effect positive change to housing policy in Wales and to pursue such opportunities in liaison with the line manager and other staff.

General

- 2.1 To support the work of volunteers and other placements as requested.
- 2.2 Participate as and when required in team and one-to-one meetings, and undertake, as appropriate, courses/training/other developmental activities, relevant to the role.
- 2.3 Ensure, in the course of employment, complete confidentiality is maintained in respect of the Charity, its dealings, transactions, affairs and all other information relating to clients, participants, associates, staff and other subsidiaries etc.
- 2.4 Keep up to date with developments within Shelter Cymru and other sector-wide practices, which influence the day-to-day activities within the role, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and any other relevant internal/external factor(s).
- 2.5 Ensure all activities comply with appropriate legal requirements and with Shelter Cymru policies and procedures.
- 2.6 Demonstrate commitment to the aims and objectives of Shelter Cymru and the implementation of its Equal Opportunities policy and Welsh Language Scheme in the workplace.

In addition to the duties and responsibilities outlined, you must be prepared to undertake such additional duties which may result from changing circumstances, but which may not of necessity change the general character or level of responsibility to the post.

You will be subject to a performance review which will incorporate a review of the above duties and performance over the period.

As the post may involve working with vulnerable people, your employment will be subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Scheme check.

Role specification: Housing Law Caseworker (CVV)

Skills, Experience and Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Relevant prior work experience in the housing, legal or social welfare advice sectors, paid or voluntary		✓
Knowledge and understanding of housing and housing-related benefits law, regulations and guidance		✓
A belief that everyone has the right to a decent home	✓	
A caring, non-judgemental and professional manner	✓	
Clear verbal communication and the ability to connect with people	✓	
Written skills suitable for writing letters to a range of recipients and for making good case records	✓	
Numeracy skills suitable for working out benefit entitlements, arrears and other financial matters	✓	
Resourcefulness, research and problem-solving skills and attention to detail	✓	
The ability to build a convincing legal argument from the evidence available	✓	
The ability to cope with challenging and emotionally-charged situations	✓	
Tact and diplomacy to deal with sensitive and confidential information	✓	
Good organisational skills to manage a high caseload and competing demands	✓	
Confident in use of word, email, internet and Microsoft Teams.	✓	
The ability to work on your own initiative as well as part of a team	✓	
The ability to establish and maintain good, respectful working relationships with other organisations and agencies, whilst advocating for clients' rights	✓	
Awareness of and commitment to equality and diversity issues	✓	
Able to work flexibly which will include travelling to other locations/surgeries in an acceptably time-efficient manner, and on occasion, working outside usual office hours.	✓	
Fluent in Conversational Welsh		✓
A relevant qualifications in housing studies, law, social/community work or similar subject		✓

Core competencies

Listed below are Shelter Cymru's core competencies. Each competency provides a list of positive behavioural indicators which we believe best describe what good performance looks like.

1. Leadership and Integrity

This is about being able to motivate teams and colleagues, having a clear vision for the team and acting fairly and responsibly in all circumstances. Also, where there is no formal leadership role, taking the lead on certain projects or initiatives.

2 Motivation and initiative

We believe that staff should make as many decisions as possible within their remit and concerning their roles and responsibilities without having to refer to managers.

3. Working co-operatively

Being able to work effectively with other team members and with other teams is essential in getting work done effectively.

4. Reliability

This is not only about being punctual and carrying through agreed actions to a conclusion, it is also about being able to perform the job with the minimum of supervision.

5. Change and adaptability

We want staff to be open minded about new ideas and methods of working. We want staff to be proactive in improving their skills and knowledge in line with new developments and opportunities. We also want staff to contribute to ideas and innovations.

6. Respect

We expect staff to reflect the key organisation attribute of respect, which is both towards other colleagues, and users of the organisation.

7. Problem solving

We expect staff not to simply identify problems but to help solve them.

8. Budget and cost aware

Whatever staff do they must consider whether it is value for money. In addition staff should be aware of team and organisational budgets and adhere to financial rules and procedures.

9. Administration

Staff are expected to complete their own personal administration requirements on time and accurately. Also, when required, to provide timely information for team or project reports.

Other Conditions

Salary	£26,862 per annum (pro rata) £24,560pa
Contract type	FXTM Contract until June 2024
Hours	Normal office hours are 9.30 am to 5.30 pm, Monday to Friday, although alternative hours may be worked with line manager agreement. Work outside office hours may sometimes be necessary and will be compensated for by time off in lieu.
Annual leave	29 days plus two concessionary days at Christmas and New Year (excluding statutory and national holidays). Annual leave and statutory holidays are calculated on a pro rata basis where applicable.
Pension	Shelter Cymru operates a contributory pension scheme. Shelter Cymru will auto-enrol you into the scheme in accordance with its auto-enrolment obligations. Full details of the scheme will be provided to you once you are enrolled, including the minimum level of contributions that you will be required to make during your membership (current contributions – employer 4% and employee 5%).
Mileage	A fixed rate allowance is payable for agreed mileage undertaken on Shelter Cymru business in a private vehicle, over and above your usual journey to your workplace/s.
Location	We are developing a flexible and hybrid working approach for all staff, with a minimum of one day per week working in the office and have offices across Wales (Cardiff, Swansea, Rhyl, Felinheli and Wrexham)

Please return your completed application by email to humanresources@sheltercymru.org.uk

An application form and guidelines can be found online on our [Vacancies page](#)

Registered Charity Number: 515902