**Job Description**

**Title:** Female housing & homelessness support worker – Women First Project

**Hours:** 20 hours per week

**Salary:** £23,000 pro rota plus 5% pension contribution (£12,432)

**Contract:** Fixed contract until 31st March 2021

**Reports To:** Chief Officer

**Qualification & Experience:** No formal qualifications required but must have high emotional intelligence, resilience, and a passion to make a difference some experience of working within the homelessness sector is advantageous.

**Genuine Occupational Qualification:**

Due to the nature of the project this post is only available to female applicants. This post is exempt under the Employment (Sex Discrimination) Act 2000.

Encompass is a growing voluntary organisation providing services to some of the most complex clients across Northern Devon and surrounding areas. We are currently looking to recruit a highly motivated, emotionally intelligent and resilient support worker whose passion is delivering quality client care and who thrives off innovation. Women First is a new partnership between Encompass, North Devon Against Domestic Abuse (NDADA) and Mind Mental Health delivering gender informed and trauma informed support to women who are rough sleeping, homeless or living in temporary accommodation.

Funded by Homeless Link, the overall aim of this project is to provide a range of gender informed and trauma informed services to women and agencies working with women to reduce and prevent homelessness across Northern Devon.

This is an exciting opportunity to be part of a team aimed at reducing women’s homelessness across North Devon and Torridge.

**Purpose of the Job**

Working in close collaboration with the key partners and wider voluntary and statutory services, the “Women’s First” project aims to develop a range of gender informed and trauma informed services for women and agencies working with women to reduce and prevent homelessness across Northern Devon.

The post holder will provide an integrated programme of homelessness and crisis prevention, resolution and resilience building measures tailored to individual need. You will provide advice, information and support aimed at empowering women to take control of their lives, promoting better informed decisions by increasing awareness of housing, homelessness and safer lifestyles. We will develop a peer support network which aims to see women supporting women which will be underpinned by the desire to End Women’s Homelessness.

Specifically the project will provide:

* A weekly female only trauma informed co-located drop in service where women can receive a variety of support including access to a trained mental health adviser, domestic violence IDVA and housing support worker.
* Introduce up to 8 new supported accommodation units for females only.
* Provide support for women being discharged from hospital or prison to NFA.
* Upskill homeless agencies working across North Devon and Torridge to improve the support women receive and to raise awareness of female issues linked to homelessness through a variety of planned training workshops.
* Develop a women supporting women peer network to facilitate client involvement at all stages of female homelessness services to ensure that they are relevant and reaching some of the most vulnerable females within our community.

**Main Duties**

Housing & Homelessness

* To map out specialist gender informed accommodation solutions across Northern Devon with the aim to increase the offer from the start to the end of the project.
* To provide intensive support to women who are homeless, rough sleeping or living in temporary accommodation to support them to access appropriate accommodation
* Attend the weekly gender informed drop in service to offer advice and support to women on a variety of issues from rough sleeping to move on accommodation.
* Attend outreach with the enhanced outreach team to engage with women who are rough sleeping
* Attend the fortnightly HUB meetings to advocate for women who are homeless or rough sleeping
* To support women who are being discharged from hospital or prison into appropriate accommodation
* To work with the chief officer to identify new gender informed housing opportunities locally through either private lets, social landlords or social investors

General

* To work in partnership with NDADA and Mind Support workers to deliver the outcomes of the project
* Actively promote the “Women First” project across a wide selection of agencies
* To identify the training needs across homelessness services in North Devon and Torridge and prepare a training plan based on need
* Support and encourage women to be part of the peer support network and get involved in the development of the project.

**Administration, Records and Statistics:**

* Prepare monthly time sheets are submitted by the 7th of the following month.
* Accurately maintain all project records /reports/client records/client notes & etc.
* Actively be involved in the development of outcomes and outputs related to the project. Record, monitor, analyse and present statistics in relation to these to enable the provision of reports to project funding providers and other organisations as directed by the Project Manager & Chief Officer, ensuring these are of a high standard.
* Remain up to date and proficient in the use of all relevant IT applications and undertake training as required.

**General Duties:**

* Attend training sessions and courses as required.
* Carry out any other duties commensurate with the post which may be reasonably requested from time to time
* The post holder will comply with and work within in the context of all Encompass policies, procedures and practices.
* Adhere to Encompass Equal Opportunities Policy, applying anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that all services are made as accessible as possible to clients.
* Maintain confidentiality of information about staff, clients and Encompass business and be aware of the Data Protection Act 1998 and Encompass Data Protection (GDPR) and Confidentiality policies and procedures.
* Comply with the Health and Safety Policy in all aspects of the work, carrying out health and safety checks in line with policy and keeping records as required.
* Attend and contribute to regular supervision job appraisal meetings with the Chief Officer.

Post- holders will require an Enhanced CRB check.

**Person Specification**

**Knowledge, Training & Experience:
Essential**

* Extensive experience and knowledge of working with vulnerable people
* Experience of working within the homelessness sector
* Must have robust networks with relevant partner agencies or be able to swiftly build relationships if new to the area
* Ability to demonstrate a range of leadership styles to deliver the project aims.
* History of affecting real change with vulnerable individuals or families
* Experience in managing proactive and reactive workloads.
* Ability to use initiative to resolve complex problems
* Experience of working under pressure and prioritising workload
* Well organised and methodical
* Experience of assessing complex situations and making reasoned decisions
* Excellent communication skills, written and oral, together with the ability to cope well in stressful situations, being assertive when necessary, and to act tactfully and with care in conflict situations.
* Experience of working within a trauma informed care (TIC) environment when supporting clients to avoid traumatisation.

**Communication Skills:**

**Essential**

* Developed communication skills for delivering key messages to a range of stakeholders both statutory and voluntary sector.
* Ability to use informed persuasion and negotiation skills to influence others.
* Ability to be able to listen without judgment

**Desirable**

* Good presentation skills for conveying complex concepts.

**Analytical:**

**Essential**

* Ability to identify risks, anticipate issues, create solutions and to resolve problems in relation to project or service delivery.
* Ability to understand a broad range of complex information quickly and make safe decisions where opinions differ / no obvious solution.

**Planning Skills**

**Desirable**

* Evidence of planning and delivering programmes, projects and services on time.

**Personal Attributes and Other Requirements:**

**Essential**

* Methodical approach to work
* Clear thinking
* Non-judgemental, client centred approach
* Flexible
* Persistent
* Able to work under pressure
* Committed Team Worker. Ability to work alone as well as part of a Team
* Confident in handling difficult situations
* Assertive
* Self-motivated and energetic
* Sense of humour
* Relates well to client group

**Desirable**

* Current driving licence and use of vehicle

**What we can offer YOU**

* The opportunity to be part of an enthusiastic, friendly, motivated, fast growing and highly professional team working together to make a difference to some of the most marginalised people in our community.
* A supportive environment offering structured supervision allowing you the time and space to reflect on your practice and offload when necessary with a trained psychologist
* 28 days annual leave plus 8 recognised bank holidays – valued time away to spend doing what you love.
* The opportunity to grow your skills and knowledge within a Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) and Trauma Informed Care (TIC).