

Debt Paralegal

What's it all about

You will form an integral part of Notting Hill Genesis' legal resources by providing legal support to the operational teams and/or repairs teams on a range of housing management and disrepair issues.

You'll be a trusted and knowledgeable voice on legal matters in relation to these matters to the wider business.

Working closely with the wider operational teams including local officers, repair teams and tenancy sustainment and safeguarding teams, you'll ensure cases are handled sensitively, making recommendations and driving appropriate outcomes that safeguard the business whilst putting the resident at the centre of decisions.

How you'll make a difference

You will be accountable for cases referred to you by the operational and/or repairs teams. You'll use your proven knowledge and judgement in collaboration with the operational teams to manage and mitigate risk for the organisation. You will be able to balance resident centricity against business risk in communicating advice and weighing up decisions.

You will provide training, support and advice to operational teams and repairs teams on housing management, leasehold matters and disrepair, empowering them to make day to day management decisions effectively.

You will work on a caseload basis allowing you to sustain great relationships with colleagues and better understand the properties and residents within the area you provide legal support to.

How you'll do it

- Manage a caseload and provide legal support to operational teams on escalated housing management with an emphasis on dealing with money claims and debt recovery. This includes but is not limited to; possession, injunction, disrepair, breach of tenancy claims including anti-social behaviour, fraud and sub-letting, property disputes, leasehold management issues
- including breach of lease claims, tenancy succession and rent debt recovery and service charge disputes.
- Provide comprehensive legal support to the repairs team in respect of disrepair casework, particularly, the handling and management of disrepair claims within the pre-action protocol.
- Work effectively with panel solicitors where cases (including disrepair) require external involvement.
- Work collaboratively and coach Legal Assistants across casework as needed.
- Utilise other departments and work effectively with them on cases that may require their input such as the service charge, assets, repairs and operational teams.
- Confidentially represent NHG in external settings such as court, multi-agency meetings, local authority engagement meetings, mediation and casework panels on tenancy and lease breach issues.
- Prepare, draft and respond to all necessary legal documentation and bundles, evidence and witness statements as required and to a high standard. This includes internal reports and papers with recommendations for decision.
- Take ownership and accountability for your caseload in accordance with performance indicators and own the end to end process. Seek advice, flag risk and offer mitigations on issues that may arise.
- Work closely with the operational teams and tenancy sustainment and safeguarding teams, to be confident that legal escalation takes place once all reasonable proactive engagement with residents has been exhausted, always focusing on tenancy sustainment objectives.
- Support and advise operational teams to ensure legal risks are identified and mitigated appropriately and where possible proactively. Feed into policy and practices to support this.

- Maintain an excellent working knowledge of housing and leasehold legislation and case law and embed into your working practice.
- Work alongside legal colleagues to deliver meaningful training, guidance and advice to operational teams on key risk themes.
- Lead team and organisational projects working with the wider legal team to deliver objectives.
- Collaborate and support your colleagues in the legal team to ensure that resources are deployed in accordance with business need.
- Provide guidance and advice to operational teams to allow them to make informed management decisions and effectively manage their work.
- Ensure you update required systems and reconcile data from various sources to provide clear update on caseload and risk.
- Work with managers, heads of and wider operational teams to review risk and limit the instruction of external solicitors with cost focus in mind.
- Provide visible support to the business, carrying out surgeries, training and advice drop ins regularly.
- Provide support to team managers/team leaders on complex cases where necessary.
- Work in accordance with team procedures and policies to ensure sound working practices and effectiveness of the team.

All about you

Behaviours for success

Our values set out what we stand for. You'll need to show us how you match them and how you'll behave to ensure those are visible when carrying out your work.

- Compassionate
- Progressive
- Dependable

- Inclusive
- Empowered

For each value, we've created example behaviours to help you understand our expectations in more detail. This role is at **staff** level.

Essential knowledge, experience and skills including qualifications and professional membership

Pending confirmation of legislative changes, this role may require a qualification to demonstrate competence. If not already qualified, there may be an expectation to study towards a professional qualification.

- Experience of working within a legal department, housing association, local authority or similar organisation
- Experience managing your own caseload with cases similar to those required in this role
- Good spoken and written English
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Good grasp of applicable legislation and the Civil Procedure Rules.
- Good legal drafting skills.
- Strong report writing and presentation skills
- Strong organisational skills, accuracy and attention to detail
- Proficiency using legal databases and MS office suite
- Good research skills
- Ability to work independently in a fast-paced environment
- Proven ability to develop and sustain strong relationships within the legal team, operational team clients and third party stakeholders (internal and external)
- Examples of exercising good judgment and discretion to identify and mitigate against significant risk
- A law degree, CILEx or equivalent