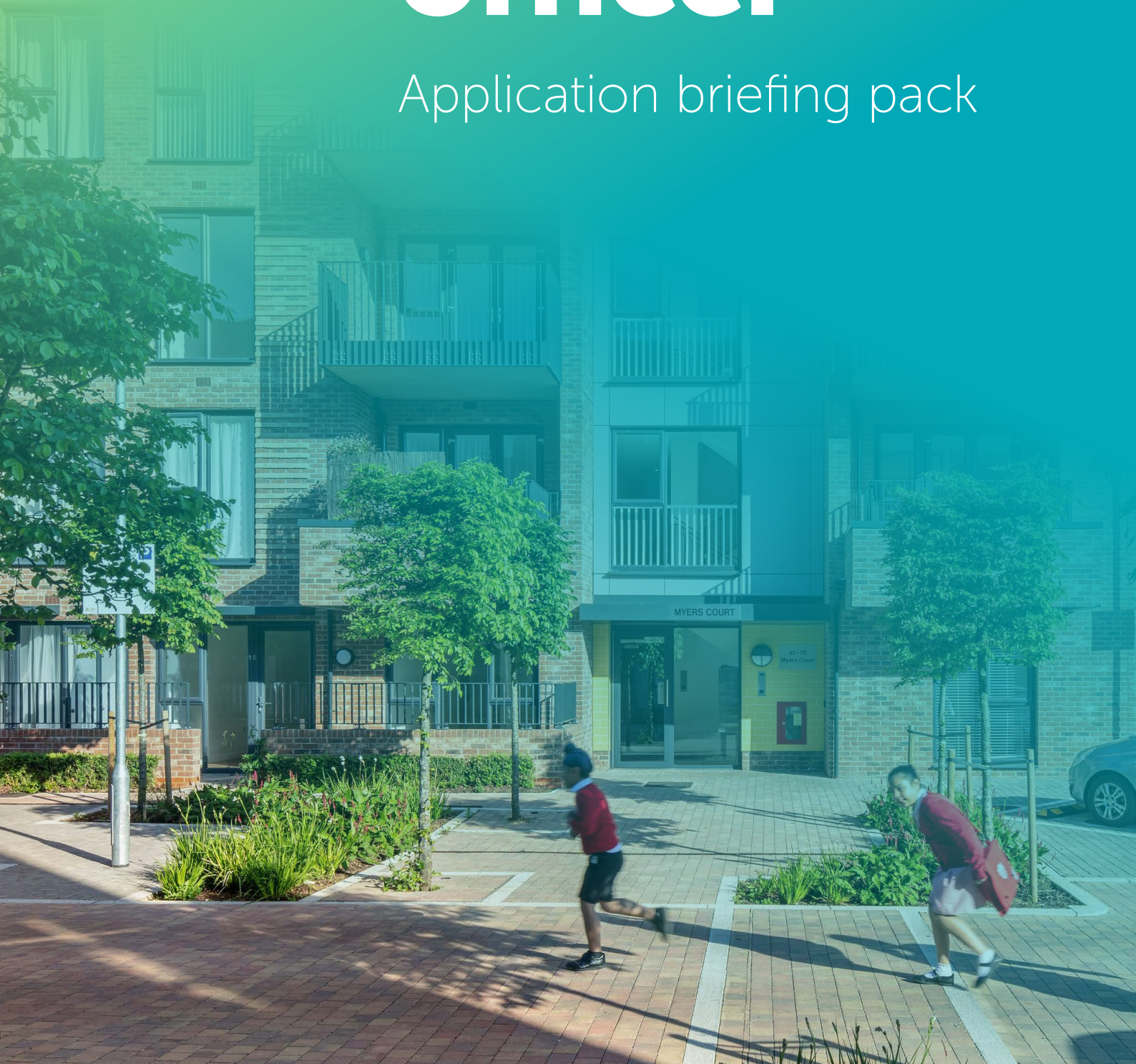




Housing officer

Application briefing pack



This briefing pack provides candidates with information and tips on how to apply for the Housing Officer role. It also explains what assessors will be looking for from candidates at each stage of the process.

Application process

The initial application process consists of several stages:

1. First, we ask candidates to answer three competency-based questions to shortlist candidates for the further rounds of assessment. We use this to test candidates written skills and mark responses against our values and behaviors.
2. Shortlisted candidates will then be booked in for a screening call where candidates will be given more information about the role and will be asked several questions assessing their customer service, prioritisation, and communication skills.
3. Candidates who progress past the initial screening call stage are sent a written assessment to be completed online. We use this to assess whether candidates have the written communication skills required for this role.
4. Those that pass the written assessment are then invited for final interview. This takes place in person at one of our offices and consists of two parts:
 - » A customer service exercise which is used to assess candidates active listening skills and understand how they would approach the situation.
 - » An interview with a panel of 2 or 3 members of NHG staff who ask competency-based questions similar to those answered in the written application. This is to score candidates against the NHG values and behaviours.

Application Questions

To apply for the role, you will need to complete three competency-based questions. Below is some guidance on what to expect and how to approach the application process.

Academic and vocational experience

You will need to provide a summary of your academic and vocational experience to date which we review to see whether a candidate has relevant experience or qualifications that might make them a good candidate. It is important to make sure that this section is complete and clear.

Though it is always desirable to have relevant experience in a similar post, for this role it is not necessary. We do not assess candidates on their experience alone but as a minimum we do require that candidates have a GCSE or comparable qualification in both Maths and English at grade A-C.

Competency-based questions.

Competency-based questions

We ask three questions which require candidates to give an example from their vocational, academic or personal experience to illustrate their answer. The questions are focused on the skills that are required for the role and our staff expectations. They concern dealing with a challenging customer, working well with others and communication.

Answers should be given in prose and make good use of the word count available as very short answers or bullet points are unlikely to be considered acceptable. Equally, it is important to make sure that all answers are of sufficient quality (rather than one strong answer being sufficient), as all answers must meet the minimum benchmark to be shortlisted.

For each of the questions, think about specific examples which demonstrate actions you have taken rather than talking in generalities or about a hypothetical situation.

The STAR method

We recommend that candidates use the STAR technique as it is a simple framework to assist with telling a meaningful story about their example. This technique gives a straightforward format that you can use to structure your response by outlining the Situation, Task, Action and Result.

Situation – set the scene and provide a summary of the example you have chosen

Task – describe your responsibility in the situation and what you needed to get done

Action – explain what steps you took to address the situation

Result – share the outcomes that the actions you took achieved

Though it is always desirable to have relevant experience in a similar post, for this role it is not necessary. We do not assess candidates on their experience alone but as a minimum we do require that candidates have a GCSE or comparable qualification in both Maths and English at grade A-C.

The screening call and the written assessment

If you are shortlisted, you will be booked in for a 20 minute screening call. This will be by telephone, although we can accommodate other channels such as a Microsoft Teams call to enable a transcript should you have any reasonable adjustment requirements.

During this call you will be given more information about the organisation, the role, and working arrangements – ***please note this role is office based and in our communities. Whilst there may be opportunities to work from home this is not a hybrid role as we need to be ready to support our residents at all times.*** The recruiter will also ask you a couple of questions to get you to elaborate on your customer service experience and these questions will be scored so please have some relevant, real-life examples of situations or tasks that you've personally handled ready for the call.

If you are successful, you will receive an email with a link to an online written assessment and a deadline to complete the assessment by. Then, when you begin the assessment, you will have 60 minutes to complete the task.

As a Housing Officer, you will produce a significant amount of written communication, so it is important that we assess candidates on this.

The situation in the written assessment is that you have taken on a new role and must respond to an unhappy resident. You are expected to read all the information provided to you so that you can provide the customer with a comprehensive response to the issues they have raised. You do not need any technical knowledge of leasehold or housing to be able to complete the written assessment as you will not be assessed on this.

In the assessment, you will be measured on your spelling and grammar, the structure of your response and how you analyse and digest information that you have received to formulate a written response. The tone of your writing is also important, particularly when responding to customers about a sensitive subject, so we will be assessing this alongside your influencing skills and how you explain your reasoning for your decisions to the customer.

As the written assessment is online, please make sure that you have a strong wi-fi connection before starting the assessment. Unfortunately, we may not be able to accept any applications if they are not completed by the specified deadline stated in the email invite.

Final Interview

a) Customer service exercise

Candidates will be asked to listen to a recording of a real-life call from one of our residents to our customer service centre. The customer has some concerns about her property and an ongoing repair so has called us for an update. This exercise aims to assess your active listening skills and understand how you would approach the situation. Following the call, the interview panel will ask you some questions surrounding the call before proceeding into the competency-based interview.

b) Interview

Our interviews are competency-based which means that we ask questions to understand how you have used your specific skills and experience to approach problems, tasks and challenges. We use this approach to identify whether or not an individual has the skills required for the role rather than just test if they have done certain tasks.

The interview will consist of four competency-based questions that relate to the following NHG competencies:

- Customer Focus
- Service Improvement
- Accountability and Delivery
- Communication and Inclusion

It is helpful to prepare before your interview by reviewing our staff expectations document and think of some good examples from your own experience that you can use to demonstrate each expectation. Feel free to make notes as you can refer to these during your interview so that you are better prepared to answer questions.

The interview questions will cover several different topics:

- Customer service skills
- Process improvement
- Managing your time and workload
- Decision making

To answer these questions, we expect candidates to draw upon their own vocational, academic, or personal experience and provide the interview panel with examples of situations or tasks that they have personally handled. The aim for this is to explain how you have approached problems, tasks and challenges and the steps that you have taken to resolve these.

Use the STAR technique explained above in your competency-based interview to ensure that your answers have structure. There will be time to refer to your notes before and during answering questions, but it is important not to spend too long deliberating on answers as this will break up the flow of the interview.

Following the competency-based questions there will also be an opportunity for you to ask the interview panel any questions that you have about the organisation or the role.