

ENGLISH RURAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Job Description – May 2026

Job Title:	Development Project Officer
Contract Type:	Permanent
Area of operation:	Development
Hours:	37.5 hours per week
Responsible to:	Development Director

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- (a) Work with colleagues in the Development Team to investigate and bring forward new housing development opportunities.
- (b) Work with the Development Director and Development Manager to ensure that the Association's development programme is delivered efficiently and in accordance with regulations, best practice, English Rural policies and procedures and the English Rural Business Strategy.
- (c) Liaise and develop effective relationships with external partners, including local authorities, Parish Councils, Homes England, developers, other Registered Providers, landowners, consultants and contractors

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

- (a) **Development Programme:**
 - Initiate and maintain positive and effective external relationships with current and potential partners and agencies important to the development process (Eg. Local Authorities and Homes England). With this role focused on Kent, Sussex and Surrey you will need to attend local housing partnership meetings and get to know key housing stakeholders within this key strategic area.
 - Represent and promote English Rural with external and partner bodies, landowners, consultants and contractors; work with the Development Director to secure the support of key stakeholders including Parish and local councils. This will involve preparing and presenting a strong case for rural housing to local communities to try and secure new housing opportunities.
 - Work with appointed professional consultants to take projects forward from inception to completion, under the direction of the Development Director, including;

- i. Investigating and appraising potential sites for development. Undertaking scheme viability and financial appraisals using the company's appraisal system to ensure the schemes meet our own affordability criteria, quality and sustainability objectives.
- ii. Coordinating site feasibility studies and necessary site surveys
- iii. Appointing and coordinating the work of technical and design consultants, including preparation and submission of planning applications. To actively coordinate planning applications from submission to successful consent, liaising with planning officers and design teams, local Parish Councillors and other specialist consultants.
- iv. Responsible for the preparation of necessary legal documentation and agreements (using external solicitors) including land acquisitions and validating/executing necessary development legal documentation such as S106, S38, S278 and nominations agreements
- v. Support any necessary applications for capital grant funding and scheme financing, ideally with some experience of the Homes England grant funding system.
- vi. To be accountable for all aspects of specifically assigned project budgets and be aware of and adhere to applicable expenditure procedures
- vii. Providing technical and project management support to secure the planning consent necessary statutory approvals and pre-construction procurement phase.
- viii. Attending site meetings as the representative of the Association as required during the construction phase
- ix. Co-ordinate arrangements at scheme handover to our Resident Services team, including pre-handover inspection visits and provision of necessary rent and service charge information to ensure the new properties are handed over effectively.
- x. Deal with defects and other post completion matters during the Defects Liability Period
- xi. Ensuring that relevant documentation is assembled and maintained for scheme audit purposes and internal health and safety information.

(b) General:

- Attend and contribute to regular meetings of the Association's Development Team (held in our London office)
- Contribute to review and amendments to the Association's Development policies and procedures
- Operate at all times in accordance with the Association's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- Ensure data is processed in accordance with the Association's procedures and in compliance with Data Protection requirements.
- Participate in the implementation of the Association's policies and procedures, including health and safety at work, equality and any associated regulatory requirements.
- Carry out such other reasonable duties as may be agreed from time to time with the Development Director.
- This role will involve regular travelling to site meetings and new opportunities within the wide geographical development area of English Rural covering much of the South East; specifically Kent, Sussex and Surrey. Applicants are therefore expected to have a valid full UK driving license and business travel insurance

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Person Specification

Project Officer - Development

PRINCIPAL APPOINTMENT CRITERIA

The demonstration of:

- (a) An appropriate qualification and/or relevant practical development experience in the Housing sector (ideally a minimum of 5 years) and preferably with experience of developing affordable and rural housing. Experience of dealing with planning applications and securing necessary construction legal obligations.
- (b) Experience of grant funding systems and ideally Homes England Social and Affordable Housing Programme (SAHP)
- (c) Excellent project management skills, particularly in communication, management of projects, conducting negotiations and maintaining effective control of projects, to facilitate the delivery of new homes to the required standard to an agreed programme and within budget
- (d) Experience and understanding of affordable housing development processes, procedures and scheme auditing in order to implement and oversee any necessary continuous improvement
- (e) As this is a hybrid role it is essential that you are able to work on your own effectively using your own initiative, following development procedures and Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. This requires good analytical and time management skills to effectively achieve deadlines, scheme budgets and demonstrate value for money for the organisation
- (f) An ability to be a team player within the small English Rural team
- (g) Ability to prioritise workload using own initiative to effectively project plan, agree project targets and meet agreed deadlines, whilst requiring a flexible approach to tasks, responsibilities and hours and location of work
- (h) A willingness and ability to travel over a wide geographical area involving some evening meetings – A full driving licence is therefore essential for the role
- (i) Professional, friendly, open and honest approach with the ability to work effectively with a wide variety of stakeholders both internally and externally
- (j) Resident/customer focused with excellent communication and interpersonal skills to deliver outstanding customer service
- (k) Excellent numeracy skills and attention to detail
- (l) Excellent IT skills, including Word, Powerpoint, Excel and commonly used software systems – Previous experience with MS Teams which we use would also be beneficial
- (m) An understanding of and support for equality and access legislation, policies and practice

ADDITIONAL DESIRABLE CRITERIA

- (a) An understanding of housing association and Homes England development procedures and scheme development standards
- (b) An understanding of construction contract procurement routes, including JCT Design and Build Contracts
- (c) Champion Health and Safety to ensure all statutory responsibilities are satisfied with an understanding of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM)
- (d) An understanding and experience of working with rural communities and excellent customer care
- (e) A track record in rural housing development, and in particular the development of Rural Exception Sites, including experience of constructive engagement with district and parish councils, and in resolving issues involving sensitive and/or technically difficult sites

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