

# CANDIDATE BRIEFING PACK

## Finance Officer



Ark Housing logo: QUALITY HOMES, Ark HOUSING, STRONG COMMUNITIES

Making A Positive Difference By  
Empowering People And Communities

If you require this information booklet in an alternative format please contact John McVey, Director of Finance & Corporate Services Officer at [john.mcvey@arkhousing.co.uk](mailto:john.mcvey@arkhousing.co.uk) or on 02890 752310.

## **Introduction**

Thank you for your interest in applying for this position with Ark Housing. Please use the information provided to assist you in completing your application. Should you require any further assistance please contact us directly and we will be pleased to assist you.

## **General Information**

Ark Housing Association is a registered Housing Association with the Department for Communities and Financial Conduct Authority, and is an independent not for profit organisation under the Industrial & Provident Society Act (NI) 1969. We are also registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

We were established in 1987 as Down and Connor Housing Association to provide social and affordable homes for people in housing need. In 1999 the organisation was renamed Ark Housing Association to reflect our history and growing ambition.

We are based in Belfast but operate across all district council areas and we build, manage, and maintain homes to meet the needs of a wide range of demographics. In addition to providing homes for general needs families we also provide a range of accommodation and support services to enable people to manage and sustain their tenancies and live independently. All permanent allocations of our homes are made in accordance with the Common Selection Scheme for Northern Ireland which is administered by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

We operate several successful partnerships with specialist agencies and statutory bodies. These include Threshold N.I; Inspire Wellbeing; Belfast Health and Social Care Trust; South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust; Supporting People and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. We also manage a floating support homeless service for families threatened with or experiencing homelessness.

Our new build developments are funded through a combination of private finance with capital funding grants received from the Department for Communities and we are also revenue funded for some specialist services through the Supporting People Programme.

We currently manage 862 homes, have an active development programme with 300 more currently on site, and aim to have up to 1,300 homes in management by March 2027. We employ 42 permanent and temporary staff in a range of scheme and office based roles.

## Our Vision, Mission and Values

At Ark Housing Association we pride ourselves on being an innovative and progressive organisation. We nurture open and honest internal and external relationships and we value partnership, collaboration, and professional development. We empower and trust our people to deliver and in return we actively support them through a myriad of forward thinking policies and practises.

### **Our vision is:**

“Making a positive difference by empowering people and communities”.

### **Our mission is:**

“In partnership, provide quality homes and support services to meet housing need and contribute to the wellbeing of communities”.

### **Our core values are:**

Progressive	<i>Forward thinking, supporting change and transformational</i>
Respect	<i>Treat everyone with dignity and esteem</i>
Integrity	<i>Maintain the highest professional and personal standards</i>
Diversity and Equality	<i>Value diversity and equality in everything we do</i>
Excellence	<i>Strive to deliver the highest standards of quality and customer care.</i>

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	Finance Officer
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Head Office, Belfast
<b>ACCOUNTABLE TO:</b>	Director of Finance & Corporate Services
<b>REPORTING TO:</b>	Director of Finance & Corporate Services

### **JOB PURPOSE:**

To contribute to the delivery of a comprehensive, efficient and effective finance and corporate services function, in accordance with the strategic objectives of Ark Housing.

### **MAIN TASKS:**

As one of two Finance Officers in the Finance Department, the post-holder will share the duties below and provide holiday/sickness cover for the other officer.

#### **Rent, Purchase and Nominal Ledgers**

- Rent Ledger - setting up new properties, running the weekly rent debit, maintaining the cash book and posting rent receivable to tenant accounts
- Purchase Ledger - Adding new suppliers to system, raising purchase orders, processing of invoices for payment via on-line banking, ensuring appropriate nominal coding and authorisations for invoices, reconciling supplier statements.
- Posting journals on the Nominal Ledger, posting receipts and payments to ensure a comprehensive and accurate trial balance in preparation for management accounts.

#### **Cashflows**

- Assisting with the compiling of Development cashflows and organisational cashflows

#### **Assisting with the preparation of Management Accounts**

- Reconciling bank accounts, loan accounts and various control accounts.
- Assisting with the preparation of accrual and prepayment schedules
- Assisting with maintaining the Fixed Asset Ledgers
- Posting of journals to relevant cost centres and analysis codes
- Assisting with the preparation of the monthly template for the Management Accounts reporting
- Calculation of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

### **Assisting with Budgetary Planning**

- Assisting with zero based budgeting schedules
- Assisting with cashflows for budget purposes

### **Assisting with Statutory Returns and Other**

- Providing statutory returns such as HMRC, NILGOSC, DfC and others
- Providing spreadsheets to NIHE for uploading of annual rents, rates and service charges
- Providing annual spreadsheet to LPS for calculation of standardised rates

### **Payroll and Pensions**

- Maintaining the SAGE Payroll software system, adding new employees and processing leavers.
- Amending tax codes as provided by HMRC
- Processing salary payments on SAGE Payroll system
- Providing Real Time Information to HMRC
- Completing NILGOSC reports as required.
- Providing staff payslips
- Posting salary journal to Nominal Ledger

### **Corporate Services & Quality Assurance**

- Support the Director of Finance & Corporate Services team in delivering various functions, including IT, Health & Safety, Information Governance, Training and Facilities Management.
- Contributing to the review of financial and corporate policies and procedures and working at all times in accordance with the Association's policies and procedures
- Working conscientiously with a high degree of focus, diligence and accuracy, whilst adhering to financial control systems in place
- Assisting with the managing of the Association's financial resources, with value for money at the forefront of all decisions.
- Embracing a culture of 'continuous improvement', by positively contributing to initiatives and changes, that may streamline, automate or enhance workflow to ensure the best use of time and resources.

### **Representational Role**

- Representing Ark Housing in a professional, positive and committed manner at all times in keeping with the Association's mission and values
- Representing Ark Housing at conferences, seminars, meetings and training events when required
- Participating in internal and external training or staff development being provided or recommended by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services

## **Communication**

- Ensuring effective communications both internally and externally with all colleagues and stakeholders
- Providing effective reports and correspondence as required
- Ensuring the effective use of available resources including IT provision and other communication systems.
- Always ensuring confidentiality and data protection
- Actively participate in bi-annual staff coaching reviews with the Director of Finance & Corporate Services to ensure financial objectives are being met

### **ANY OTHER DUTIES:**

This list is not exhaustive and only highlights key areas and tasks associated with this post. It cannot be prescriptive, and it is a requirement of this position that there exist high levels of flexibility and responsiveness to the changing needs of the organisational and service demands.

The postholder shall be required to positively respond to such demands and ensure that the commitment, innovation, flexibility and delivery of high-quality services remain paramount.

### **WORKING ENVIRONMENT:**

The position will be predominately office based, however, you may occasionally be required to work away from your normal base to other locations including working from home. You may on occasion be required to attend work/events outside normal office hours.

### **CONTRACTED HOURS:**

Contracted hours will normally be 37 per week, between the hours of 9am and 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am to 4.30pm Friday. Some flexibility may be required to meet deadlines.

### **HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENTS:**

Holidays would normally be 22 days per annum, rising to 27 after 5 years' service, and 32 days after 10 years' service. In addition, the Association also recognises 13 customary and bank holidays.

### **SALARY & BENEFITS:**

Salary range of £30,413 - £34,939 with a starting salary of £30,413. Salaries are reviewed annually and uplifted in accordance with the Association's remuneration policy.

The Association is a member of the NILGOSC pension facility. Current rate of employer contribution is 19%.

**PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION**

**Position:** Finance Officer

**Date:** December 2024

<b>SHORTLISTING CRITERIA</b>	<b>ESSENTIAL CRITERIA</b>	<b>DESIRABLE CRITERIA</b>
Qualifications & Experience	<p>Applicant must have at least 5 GCSEs including Maths and English</p> <p>Accounting Technician qualification or other similar accounting qualification.</p> <p>At least 2 years in a busy finance office environment</p> <p align="center"><b>Or</b></p> <p>Relevant degree level qualification</p> <p>At least 1 year in a busy finance office environment</p> <p align="center"><b>Or</b></p> <p>Have at least 5 GCSEs including English &amp; Maths and 5 years relevant experience in the last 8 years in a busy finance office environment</p>	<p>Accountancy qualification at degree level</p> <p>Experience in the Housing Sector</p>
Practical Skills & Knowledge	<p>Experience in Purchase Ledger</p> <p>Computer literacy with a good working knowledge of Microsoft office, in particular strong Excel skills</p>	Working knowledge of SDM housing software
Data Protection	Is familiar with the requirements of the general data Protection Regulations and is experienced in providing a confidential service to customers and in managing their personal information in a confidential manner.	

<b>PERSONAL BEHAVIOURS</b>		
Embracing Change	Contributes positively to change and recognises the positive impact of change on individuals and the team. Is flexible and positively accepts change.	
Equality	Treats all colleagues and those with whom they come into contact with fairly and equitably and demonstrates respect for and sensitivity to their needs.	
Team Working, Communicating & Influencing	Breaks down barriers that impact effective team working. Optimises the use of the pool of knowledge and embraces a learning culture. Has effective interpersonal communication skills and experience of report writing	



## Selection Timetable

The closing date for completed applications is **4pm on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024**. Applications should be sent by email to: [recruitment@arkhousing.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@arkhousing.co.uk)

Responses will only be accepted on the relevant application form. **Please note that CVs will not be accepted.**

The shortlisting process is envisaged to take place week commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2025 with successful applicants invited for interview week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (subject to confirmation). Further details will be provided to those candidates invited to participate in this stage of the process.

In the event that a candidate is invited to interview but is unavailable on the proposed date and time due to reasons beyond their control, the panel may endeavour to accommodate an alternative arrangement subject to their own availability, although this may not be possible and is not guaranteed unless an adjustment is required in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

## **Demonstration of Competencies**

Candidates will be required to demonstrate during the selection and assessment process that they satisfy the core requirements of the post as set out in the job description and person specification.

## Guidance Notes on Completing Your Application Form

It is important that you read these notes carefully before you complete the application form.

### Job Description and Personnel Specification

The Job Description and Personnel Specification will assist you in deciding whether you meet the minimum essential criteria for this position. Please remember that the Association reserves the right to increase the criteria used for the short listing of candidates to be selected for interview without further notification.

You should use the job description and personnel specification to help you consider your relevant experience, qualifications, skills and abilities and ensure that you outline how you meet those requirements when completing the relevant section of the application.

### Short Listing Candidates

Candidates will be selected solely on the information provided in the application form therefore you should ensure that you answer all sections fully.

### Confidential Equality Monitoring Form

To comply with our obligations under Equal Opportunities and Fair Employment legislation we are required to monitor our recruitment exercises in order to ensure that

our recruitment policies and procedures are effective. All applicants are therefore required to complete the Equal Opportunities Form associated with this application.

You should ensure that you complete the Equality Form and return it in a separate envelope addressed to the Equality Officer and marked Private & Confidential or by email along with your completed application form to: [recruitment@arkhousing.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@arkhousing.co.uk)

We will not use data from our equal opportunities monitoring form as part of the selection process.

### Supporting Documents

Documentary evidence will be required if you are shortlisted to attend for interview. This will include photographic identification e.g. passport, driving licence or other form of acceptable ID.

Copies of your educational qualifications, professional membership and any other documents required to support your application will also be required. You may bring these documents to the office with you on the day of your interview and staff will arrange to copy them for you. Please note that all documents provided must be originals.

### Disclosure of Criminal Records

All applicants must complete this section of the form fully and where criminal convictions are disclosed details must be provided of the offence(s) of which the applicant has been convicted and any relevant details relating to the offences.

You should note that Ark Housing are required to carry out checks on all persons being considered for employment with the Association through the Access NI scheme.

### Data Protection

All information provided by applicants will be used solely for the purposes for which it is required in this recruitment exercise and will not be disclosed to others except where we are obliged to do so in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations.

### Equality of Opportunity

Ark Housing is an Equal Opportunities Employer and we welcome applications from all sections of our community. Arrangements can be made for those applicants who require additional support or assistance because of a disability or other consideration which may hinder them in this application process. If you require such assistance, please contact John McVey at this office on Tel: 028 90 752310 or Email: [recruitment@arkhousing.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@arkhousing.co.uk)

### General Points

The application form, if completed by hand, should be completed in **black ink** and must be legible. If submitted by post, please make sure that you leave plenty of time for your application to be received by the closing date & time. Please remember that **late applications will not be accepted.**

Ensure that you have signed and dated the application form. Electronic signatories are acceptable on emailed applications.

Do not send any supporting documentation with this application form. We may ask for such documents if your application is successful and you are short listed for interview.

Please ensure that you have the permission of your nominated referees to act on your behalf and that they agree to provide you with a reference.

Canvassing on behalf of your application will disqualify your application.