

Commercial Services Officer

Role Title	Department	Reports to
Commercial Services Officer	Development and Customer Experience	Assistant Director of Housing and Customer Experience

Purpose

The purpose of the role is to be the lead officer responsible for the property management of Arks portfolio of commercial properties, which consists of student accommodation, private residential tenancies and a range of third-party leases.

To provide commercial, high quality, proactive and customer focused services.

To ensure tenancies and leases are managed in accordance with the terms of their contracts, protocol agreements, legislation, regulation and best practice.

To assist with the future growth of Arks commercial portfolio.

To deliver outstanding services direct to customers in line with the vision and values of the organisation.

Responsibilities

Deliver a comprehensive range of property management services for commercial properties and Third-Party Leases.

Fact Finding and Analysis

Ensuring the delivery of excellent property management services within defined neighbourhoods including all tenancy related and customer facing matters. Be effective, efficient, and proactive in managing:

Third Party Leases and Protocol Agreements

- In collaboration with the Director of Development and Customer Experience establish a property quality stand and standard lease models for Third-Party leased assets;
- To review, refresh and implement the Third-Party Lease and Protocol Agreement policy and procedure;
- Carry out a full review of all current third-party leases (leased in and leased out);
- To be the lead person responsible for the negotiation and co-ordination of new leases and terminating existing leases;
- Develop a third-party lease management digital system that holds all relevant and up to date information, can be used to track and monitor leases, identify respective obligations and liabilities and manages overall compliance;
- To manage leases and protocol agreements to ensure respective parties are carrying out their contractual obligations.

Voids

- To be responsible for the end-to-end void process, which includes carrying out a pre inspection before a tenant moves out , completing inventory checks, working closely with Arks voids contractor to ensure properties meet ACILs lettable standard and re-letting within established targets;

- To work closely with the Investment Team if extensive work, for example component replacements, are required to achieve lettable standards;
- To work closely with Arks Asset Compliance and Contracts lead to ensure all property compliance checks are carried out and any associated works completed to support new occupancy;
- The void process should follow Rubixx process steps and live recording and reporting to be employed via mobile devices.

Marketing and Advertising

- Develop a marketing strategy for advertising void properties to maximise advertising reach and minimise void periods;
- Explore and establish a partnership with Edinburgh Universities to promote ACIL student accommodation to generate interest and potential tenants to minimise void periods;
- Work closely with Arks Communications and Marketing lead to promote and advertise void properties across Arks social media platforms and website;
- Lead on the negotiation of fees and services with external property advertising agencies, tenancy checking agencies and digital platforms.

Allocations

- To develop and implement an Allocations Policy for commercial residential properties;
- Effectively manage letting of vacant properties to ensure tenants and prospective tenants are matched to the right property to create balanced and sustainable communities;
- Responsible for the efficient administration of the Allocations Policy.

Tenancy Management

- To take timely and appropriate action in relation to all tenancy management issues, including conducting new tenancy and settling in visits, responding to requests to succeed to, or terminate tenancies and dealing with suspected abandonments in accordance with our policies and timescales;
- Actively promoting tenant participation in all aspects of our work.

Neighbourhood Management

- To carry out regular estate inspections to identify environmental and other issues as well as taking relevant action as appropriate to improve communities;
- To manage externally appointed Factors to ensure they are managing estates in accordance with Deed of Conditions and Factoring Agreements;
- Liaise with other stakeholders to improve the environment such as cleansing dept, environmental Health etc.

Income Management

- Manage tenancy deposits through a registered Rent Deposit Scheme at the crucial stages of the tenancy;
- Managing rent and service charge collection;
- Monitoring and controlling rent arrears taking appropriate recovery action to ensure that arrears targets are met;
- Managing all-related debt recovery (inc. former tenant) and providing recommendations for write offs;
- Obtain relevant authorisation levels for all financial transactions;
- Support the Assistant Director of Housing and Customer Experience to review annual rent and service charges

Property Repairs

- Identify and report disrepair within communal areas during tenancy and estate visits; live recording and reporting to be employed via Rubixx from mobile devices and/or reported to the responsible externally appointed Factor;
- To ensure our tenants receive a responsive service to help them fulfil their tenancies in well maintained homes, signpost and encourage tenants to report repairs as they arise directly to Arks Customer Services Team or when available the customer portal;
- To highlight poor reactive repairs/void contractor performance to Arks Housing and Neighbourhood Services Manager to raise with the contractor as part of their contract review meetings;
- Regularly monitor repairs and contractors' performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to support the Assistant Director of Housing and Customer Experience to inform monthly and quarterly reporting and contract review meetings.

Tenant Engagement and Participation

- Build a positive engagement with all commercial tenants and carry out annual visits to tenanted properties to assess condition, compliance with lease terms, assess any issues, collect any comments or feedback from tenant and capture any general concerns;
- Contribute to the issue of Newsletters and other publications;
- Participate in Tenant and Ark community events;
- Assist with the development and sustainability of effective tenant participation.

Governance, Performance and Risk

- To ensure Ark's regulatory and legislative compliance is achieved through effective monitoring and regular review of practices whilst anticipating future legal or compliance requirements;
- Monitor performance to achieve our customer service and business targets and KPIs;
- Maintain cases and events on Rubixx to ensure high quality reports can be produced as required by the Assistant Director of Housing & Customer Experience;
- Assist with the implementation and delivery of the department's annual strategic objectives and operational delivery plan.

Complaints

- Deal with Stage 1 complaints in line with Ark's complaints handling procedures;
- Ensure Rubixx case and events are regularly updated to capture all communication, outcomes, and actions;
- Escalate Stage 2 complaints to the Housing & Neighbourhood Services Manager or Assistant Director of Housing and Customer Experience where required.
- Lead and manage enquiries, disputes and cases involving the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber)

General Data Protection Regulations/FOI

- Handle and protect all personal data in line with our Data Protection policies and current Data Protection legislation;
- When required assist with responses to Freedom of Information requests or Subject Access Requests.

Value for Money

- Endeavour to achieve Value for Money in the delivery of all services;
- Develop opportunities for service improvement.

Health and Safety

- Be aware and operate Ark's health & safety policies and procedures.

Ensure Effective Communication

- Adopt a customer service and solutions orientated approach when responding to queries from managers, employees, and customers to ensure that our customers' experience of service is a positive one;
- Undertake a programme of regular customer visits to determine different customer profiles and service needs;
- Work closely with all staff across the organisation to provide appropriate professional expertise in relation to commercial property management activities;
- Resolve customer issues and complaints and apply creative thinking to identify personalised solutions;
- Attend meetings with customers and internal/external agencies to lead initiatives or resolve issues;
- Ensure we keep customers informed through a range of various methods.

Innovation and Initiative

- Carry out research of relevant markets, new initiatives and good practice to contribute to continuous improvement and growth of the commercial portfolio;
- To provide support to the Director of Development and Customer experience to appraise new business opportunities;
- Use available resources effectively and efficiently to deliver the business priorities;
- Use initiative to balance conflicting priorities;
- Where necessary, work as part of the Housing and Customer Services team to identify areas to add value, and to contribute to solutions to improve area and organisational performance;
- Collaborate with the business to fully understand the key performance issues, objectives and drivers and the associated people requirements for both current and future business challenges;
- Review, research and develop current policies and procedures to ensure they are appropriate for business needs, compliant with legislation and in line with the values of Ark;
- Support the Assistant Director of Housing & Customer Experience with the implementation and continuous development of Rubixx.

Interpersonal Skills

Internal

- Be consistent and authoritative in decision making;
- Provide support to other areas of the Business when required;
- Exercise sound judgement in the provision of advice and guidance in relation to housing related activities;
- Take responsibility for continually developing self to maximise personal contribution to the job;
- Work closely with managers within Asset Management and across the organisation to provide appropriate professional expertise in relation to commercial property management related activities;
- Maintain effective relationships with managers and employees across Ark;
- Work closely with the Assistant Director of Housing & Customer Experience ensuring customer service plans compliment Arks Corporate Strategy and associated annual strategic objectives.

External

- Understand the importance of collaborating with partner agencies to achieve great outcomes;
- Proactive approach to networking both inside and outside the organisation;
- Responsibility for managing key stakeholder relationships;
- Support the Assistant Director of Housing and Customer Experience in implementing any recommendations made by Auditors, both internal and external, to ensure that service delivery is the best it can be.

Leading and Developing People

- Assist with the prioritisation of commercial activity at an organisational level;
- Support colleagues to understand and operate within the parameters of Third-Party Leases;
- Ensure effective allocation and monitoring of commercial activity across Ark;
- Attend area management and other internal meetings as required;
- Ensure all activity is within the policies, practices, and procedures of Ark;
- Promote high standards of ethical behaviour, probity, integrity, and honesty.

Resources

- Responsible for managing the service charge budgets to achieve best value and associated procurement and managing external contractors providing those services;
- Monitoring and providing KPI data to support managers to make decisions and manage their resources effectively and efficiently.

Impact on Decisions

- Self-aware and self-motivated to realise your full potential and ability to inspire others to achieve their full potential;
- Use sound judgement to identify when commercial initiatives need to be supported by additional resources to deliver the required timescale and quality and highlight these to the Assistant Director of Housing & Customer Experience;
- Report to the Assistant Director of Housing & Customer Experience on commercial initiatives against agreed areas and organisational Key Performance Indicators, taking responsibility for and addressing areas of concern.

Person Specification

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educated to SQA Higher Qualification or equivalent 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chartered Member of Institute of Housing, Minimum Level 3 CIH Certificate in Housing Practice or equivalent proven track record in Housing or Property Management. 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letwell qualification or willingness to gain qualification 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate membership of the Chartered Institute of Housing or Associate membership of Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) 		X
Experience		
Experience working in social housing specialising in mid-market rent and/or shared ownership	X	
Experience of working in commercial property environment		X
Good knowledge of Scottish property law and compliance standards	X	
Good working knowledge of Private Residential Tenancies and associated housing legalisation	X	
Basic understanding of residential and commercial leases	X	
A fundamental understanding of the impact of changes in Housing legislation to ensure ongoing compliance.	X	
Tenant Participation and Involvement		X
Practical experience of interpreting and working with policies and procedures.	X	
Experience of using Property IT software	X	
Skills		
<p>The successful candidate should display:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of current Housing Legislation. Technical and professional housing knowledge. Computer literate, with knowledge of PC based office management systems. Financial acumen. Open and honest communication skills. Evidence of continuing professional development. Accomplished time management skills. Ability to plan effectively and prioritise workloads so that all deadlines and targets are achieved. Ability to work under delegated authority, with minimum supervision. Team player. 	X	
Competencies		
<p>As well as the ability to do this role will be assessed in conjunction with the following competence areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Boundaries - Demonstrate a high level of integrity and confidentiality. 	X	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous Learning - Ability to take responsibility for own learning and continuous improvement. • Communication - Excellent communication and interpersonal skills and a good listener. • Customer Service - An understanding of and a strong commitment to the principles of customer service. • Problem Solving - Use professional judgment to achieve creative solutions and deliver great outcomes for customers. • Teamwork - Ability to operate independently and as part of a team/ Show a willingness to participate and contribute effectively to the wider staff team. 		
General		
Full driving license and access to a vehicle	X	