



Apprentice Environmental Health Officer

Student Information Pack

London Borough of Newham

Spring/ Summer 2021



**People at the Heart
of Everything We Do**

What our team say...

“I joined Newham’s Private Sector Housing team in December 2019 and I am proud to say that my time here has been well valued, and I have also gained a lot of knowledge from all the amazing Officers I have been privileged to work with. One thing that stood out for me is that Private Sector Housing values and appreciates all their Officers, and will always push you to achieve your best.”

- **Environmental Health Officer**

“Working for Newham continues to be a fulfilling career for me. I am motivated by bringing about real changes in people’s lives and getting a sense of justice for some who often don’t have anyone else to turn to. I meet a wide range of people, get to build a connection and help bring about improvements in their homes. Considering the amount of time people are in their homes this can have a lasting positive impact for them and their families.”

- **Private Sector Housing Team Leader**

“Working within the council’s PSH team is a fantastic opportunity to gain some real experience and there are plenty of training courses available to better your understanding and to provide you with vital skills. Working for the PSH team makes you feel a real sense of team work. There is always someone you can contact to assist you whether it be your manager or your colleagues.”

- **Private Sector Housing Compliance Officer**

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Introduction

Hi I'm Wayne Pobi, a Team Leader within Newham Council's Private Sector Housing Standards (PSHS) service, and I'd like to thank you for considering us for your next career opportunity.

Within this pack you will gain a better understanding of the PSHS team, in addition to the amazing apprenticeship programme on offer. Once you've read through the supporting information, we would like to invite you to register your interest and apply for the Student Environmental Health Officer role, joining us in our efforts to support local people and their families, improving quality of life and standards of living across Newham.

During my time at Newham I have been fortunate to work with some great people and be part of some exciting projects. From day one I have been encouraged and empowered by colleagues to follow my career aspirations and develop my skills to continuously strive towards achieving my professional goals.

As part of this programme, our team and I will provide you with varied and meaningful work experience across a range of challenging but rewarding disciplines. Alongside the valuable work experience, we will support your professional and personal growth through tailored one-one meetings with your mentor, as well as continued encouragement, knowledge sharing and experience that you need to take your career to the next level.

We offer an exciting opportunity to receive high quality training and mentorship, obtain a fully funded degree in Environmental Health, and gain hands on experience by working alongside our professional Private Sector Housing team, all whilst earning a generous salary.

Within the programme you will develop a wide range of skills to equip you with the right knowledge and expertise to aspire to achieve 'Chartered' status with the very prestigious, well-respected Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.

As such, we're looking for candidates who share our passion for the environment and are motivated by improving the health and well-being of the community. If you're someone who is ambitious, talented, eager to learn, and ready to embark on a pathway to kick-start a career in environmental health, then this is the perfect opportunity for you.

This is your chance to make a real difference to the environment, and help improve people's quality of life in Newham.

Good luck with your application, and I look forward to hearing from you!

Wayne Pobi

Wayne Pobi

Team Leader, Private Sector Housing

London Borough of Newham

About Newham

Newham is a young, vibrant and aspirational inner-city London borough, which is proud to be one of the most diverse places in the country, with more than 200 dialects being spoken. There is no shortage in the new and exciting opportunities on offer to people who are innovative thinkers, want to lead by example and support our commitment to put people at the heart of everything we do.

Newham was one of the six host boroughs for the 2012 Summer Olympics and contains most of the Olympic Park, including the Olympic Stadium. The borough is also home to London City Airport, The Siemens Crystal, Westfield Stratford City and the Excel Exhibition Centre.

The area is located in the heart of East London, only 5 miles (8 km) east of the City of London and north of the River Thames. This makes Newham very well connected both locally, regionally and internationally and is set to be further enhanced when the borough's five Elizabeth line stations open.

The borough is undergoing a rapid transformation with some of the largest and exciting regeneration schemes in England. These include the revitalisation of the Royal Docks and the International Quarter in Stratford, with such development playing its part in our objective of maximising the potential of Newham and its residents.

With so many industries, retail establishments and one of the largest private rented sectors in England, you will benefit from broadening your skills and experiences in all aspects of Environmental Health.

Our Private Sector Housing Team

Throughout your time as an apprentice, you will be based within the Private sector housing standards team. This will allow you to gain valuable knowledge and hands on experience of inspecting privately rented properties and learning about the range of intervention strategies such as enforcement, education and advice, aimed at improving the quality, safety and choice of residents across Newham.

The London Borough of Newham has the largest privately rented stock in England as a proportion of its overall housing stock, and over half of Newham households (60,000) depend on a private landlord for their welfare and health and safety. 1 in 4 homes have been found to have hazards to health, with many families subject to overcrowding, as they struggle with affording the rent and the means to heat their homes on low incomes.

Alongside the expansion of the private rented sector (PRS) in Newham, there are now over 17,000 private landlords, including a significant amount that lack the basic knowledge and skills needed to manage residential properties.

In response to these circumstances, Newham became the first local authority to introduce borough wide property licensing of all private landlords in January 2013. Since 2013 we have since issued approximately 80,000 licences with the intention of raising housing standards across Newham, penalising landlords who fail to provide homes of suitable quality.

Taking responsibility for regulating and driving the strategic direction of the PRS, the service is influential in underpinning the core values and initiatives of the Council, since its work directly impacts on the majority of Newham households.

In addition to the administrative and property licencing functions, there is a strong regulatory theme across the service, with new corporate priorities which includes an empty homes project, and the contribution to the climate change agenda through innovative energy efficiency initiatives. The service is also a key provider to the Council's data warehouse, collating information and intelligence on housing to services across the Council.

The Council is focussed on delivering the best possible outcomes for its communities, placing people at the heart of everything we do. This can only be achieved by cross disciplinary and partnership working with internal and external stakeholders, for all aspects of the housing delivery function. This network includes amongst others Social Care Safeguarding, Council Tax and Benefits, Planning, the Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade, HMRC, all of which provide a number of additional social and financial benefits to the Council.

The Apprenticeship Programme

The London Borough of Newham's Private Sector Housing Team have teamed up with Middlesex University to offer the successful candidates a rare and unique opportunity to train through a fully funded apprenticeship scheme for a degree in Environmental Health.

We are looking for someone who is ambitious, innovative and presents a strong level of interpersonal skills, whilst sharing the same values as we do.

We will provide you with:

- Time to attend a fully funded part time 4 year Environmental Health (Apprenticeship) BSc (Honours) degree
- Hands on experience primarily supporting the Private Sector Housing Standards Team
- Full support through mentoring and regular assessments
- Opportunities to gain valuable knowledge and experience in other areas of Environmental health such as Food Safety, Health and Safety, Pollution Control and Public Health
- Actual caseloads to help develop your learning experience and knowledge and support your theoretical learning
- The opportunity to gain chartered status as an Environmental Health Practitioner

On successful completion of the programme, you will have the opportunity to progress to an external employee or be placed in an appropriate vacancy at Newham, should one exist.

About the degree

The Environmental Health (Apprenticeship) BSc (Honours) degree is a professional programme that will prepare you for a career as an Environmental Health Practitioner in the public or private UK sector. You will gain the knowledge and skills to assess and apply effective solutions to improve environmental and public health in a variety of settings. Further details about the degree are described as below.

Start date	27 th September 2021
Duration	4 years full-time
Attendance	Full-time degree apprenticeship via blended learning
Fees	There is no cost to do the degree apprenticeship for the apprentice/student. You will earn between £24,462 - £25,809pa
Course leader	Hasan Erdogan

Through your studies on-campus and experience in the workplace, you will explore the relationship between professional, domestic and leisure environments and how they impact on the health and well-being of individuals and societies. You will cover a range of topics including public health, food safety, environmental protection, private sector housing improvement and occupational health and safety.

Your studies on campus and experience in the work place will be divided per week by the following:

- **Year 1:** 3 days attendance per week (for 24 weeks i.e. the academic year), with the remainder of days in the workplace.
- **Years 2-4:** 1-2 days attendance per week (for 24 weeks i.e. the academic year), with the remainder of days in the workplace

Middlesex benefits from having exceptional facilities on campus that will support your academic and practical learning throughout your course. The campus boasts a food inspection laboratory, an environmental and occupational health laboratory, a Grade 2 microbiology laboratory, a biology laboratory and chemistry laboratories.

Entry Requirements

To qualify for the apprenticeship you will need:

- Grade 4 / C or above in English and Maths GCSE (or other level 2 equivalent)
- 96 UCAS points (typically at grades CCC – A level or level 3 equivalent)
- Minimum of one science or technology based subject at A level (see Job Description for more info)

For more information on the entry requirements please visit:

<https://www.mdx.ac.uk/courses/degree-apprenticeships/environmental-healthapprenticeship-bsc>

https://www.mdx.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0032/586463/BSc-EnvironmentalHealth-Degree-Apprenticeship-Programme-Specification.pdf

Your role as an Environmental Health Officer

As an Environmental Health Practitioner, you will keep Newham residents protected by keeping our homes, water, food, air and land safe from hazards likely to harm a person's health, prevent disease and help create a healthy community environment. EHOs are instrumental in improving a populations health outcomes and reducing the burden of disease.

You will be highly trained to a degree level with opportunities to constantly develop your professional skills through further training and continuous professional development.

The 5 disciplines of Environmental Health

- 1) Housing and Communities
- 2) Food Safety
- 3) Environmental Protection
- 4) Health and Safety
- 5) Public Health

Housing and Communities

The Housing and Communities service area within the Private Sector Housing Standards team, have environmental health officers who assess the quality and condition of private landlord homes within Newham to ensure they meet the local and national standards required to rent a property. Our team actively carries out property inspections and works out if there is a risk of harm due to the hazards that may be present in a home. They consider dangers within the home based on things such as the chance of harm, how serious it would be and any extra risk to children or older people.

With over half of Newham households (60,000) depending on a private landlord for their welfare and health and safety, it means our team has to be vigilant, accurate and active in protecting the health of our residents. 1 in 4 homes have been found to have hazards to health, with many families subject to overcrowding, as they struggle with affording the rent and the means to heat their homes on low incomes.

There are many complex issues which can affect the conditions of a home and the circumstances under which a family lives in a private rented property, our work around housing and communities must tackle these issues as soon as possible and implement a strategy of long-lasting methods to ensuring housing standards are always at the highest level. Our work means that all landlords now have to do what good landlords already do.

Core Responsibilities:

- Ensuring standards are maintained
- Inspecting poor, insanitary and overcrowded properties
- Enforce Housing legislation where standards are not maintained
- Reduce hazards in the home
- Prepare specifications of remedial works

Food Safety

The Food safety teams sits within Commercial Environmental Health as part of the Licensing & Regulation function, and is essential to keeping the Newham population safe. Within a Local Authority setting Food Safety Teams are primarily regulators, with their work revolving around programmed inspections. The team has a significant work portfolio including manufacturing, sampling, imported food control, infectious disease, shisha, events, advice and Food Hygiene Rating Scheme engagement. Healthy

Catering has also been added to the work stream, to tackle problems with obesity and unhealthy diets, particularly in our school age residents.

Currently there are over 2650 food premises in Newham which is the highest it has ever been. Each year about 1000 of those premises will receive an inspection and there will be around 900 service requests. Moving forward this year the team will be actively involved in monitoring allergens, sampling imported food and keeping up with the new regulatory challenges posed by Brexit.

Core Responsibilities:

- Ensuring the food we eat is safe
- Correct labelling, preparing, handling and storing of food hygienically
- Investigating food complaints and food poisoning outbreaks
- Providing advice and guidance
- Inspecting food premises and taking enforcement action

Environmental Protection

The Environmental Protection department implement Newham's statutory duty to regulate air quality/pollution levels throughout the borough, control noise levels from industry, ensure any development activity is in line with Local and London Plan policies, as well as investigate and bring back into use contaminated land sites. The team covers a broad spectrum of environmental work, to help achieve local objectives, implement national guidelines and create a clean environment for Newham residents.

An outstanding feature of Newham's Environmental Protection team is the deployment of one of the largest networks of air quality monitors in the country, which is crucial in understanding emissions concentrations. Having this data helps us to make decisions and employ technology, innovative and creative solutions to clean up dirty

air in the borough through initiatives and projects in public health, transport, industry, planning and development.

At the council, we are working on several projects and interventions to target and reduce air pollution, including Healthy School Streets, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Idling Action, Emissions Based Parking.

Core Responsibilities:

- Improving air quality and pollution control
- Controlling noise levels from industry, neighbours, events
- Contribute comments to pollution issues for new planning applications
- Investigate land contamination and help bring contaminated land back into use
- Take enforcement action where levels not met or maintained

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 is the primary piece of legislation governing workplace health and safety in Great Britain. The enforcement of this legislation and other laws which ensure health and safety, is the responsibility of Newham Council as the local authority.

The working environment is not the same everywhere, and this can differ drastically between various places. However, regardless of what the working environment is, it is the duty of the employer to provide their workers with a suitable working environment which meets the required standards. Some working environments present significant risk to employee health and safety, from falling materials, contact with hazardous substances, contaminated air, extremes of temperature, or the less drastic risks such as assessing confined spaces and monitoring risks of hazards that can cause slips, trips and falls.

With more than half of Newham's population over the working age, this means there are thousands of people who we need to make sure are safe when doing their work. This also means, liaising with businesses to establish if they have the correct processes and programmes in place to ensure the health and safety of their workers, as well as intervening where necessary by using the law to make sure work environments that are not safe become safe or are closed down.

Core Responsibilities:

- Keeping workplaces healthy and safe
- Investigate accidents and work related illnesses
- Enforce health and safety law
- Identify hazards in the workplace
- Educating businesses to operate safely

Public Health

The Public Health Team in Newham is based in the Adults and Health Directorate, it has a strategic role in promoting and securing improved health outcomes for our residents. This is achieved by working with teams and colleagues across the council, and external partners, in order to protect the health of the entire population. This work is achieved by promoting healthy lifestyles, researching disease and injury prevention, and detecting, preventing and responding to infectious disease.

A large part of our work during 2020/21 has been around the management and response to the Corona Virus Outbreak and colleagues in Environmental Health have played a huge supporting role during the Pandemic and they continue to do so.

The key strategic document relating to Public Health in Newham is the Health and Wellbeing Strategy – 50 Steps to a Healthier Newham. This strategy is also an important part of the Council's recovery plan, as it sets out the 12 priorities and 50

steps that we are focusing on to improve health and wellbeing in the Borough and to tackle Health Inequalities.

Core Responsibilities

- Protecting communities from threats to their health and wellbeing
- Improving communities quality of life
- Address determinates of health in our homes, places of work, lifestyle
- Helping individuals and communities stay safe
- Health protection by tackling things like disease outbreaks, respiratory conditions
- Addressing challenges such as access to healthy foods, anti- social behaviour, smoke free environments

Job Description

The role of an Environmental Health Practitioner creates opportunities to specialise in one chosen area post qualification.

You will develop the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively execute your duties as an Environmental Health Practitioner. By building on your understanding of law, environmental science and technology, food science, microbiology, epidemiology, pest control and toxicology.

With a combination of your theoretical and practical experiences, you will be able to carry out environmental health related incidents and criminal investigations through having a thorough understanding of the application of legislation.

On a day to day basis a practitioner may:

- Inspect privately rented properties within their area and enforce legislative action against poor, insanitary housing standards
- improve fire safety and reduce overcrowding
- Inspect business premises for health and safety, food hygiene standards
- Investigate and follow up complaints of pests, food poisoning and infectious disease
- Enforce environmental health laws
- Give advice to landlords and tenants
- Prepare casework for court/tribunal hearings
- Give evidence in court and at tribunals as an expert witness
- Write records and reports
- Advise landlords and employers on all aspects of environmental health

You can expect your workplace to be varied and interesting, by carrying out your duties on site, in the office, at home and in court.

Qualities that make a good Environmental Health Practitioner include:

- Strong and clear written and verbal communication skills
- Interpersonal skills – explain legislation and procedures to people from all backgrounds
- Attention to detail
- Ability to analyse and solve problems
- Good thinking and reasoning skills
- Patience and ability to remain calm in stressful situations
- Competence on entering data on computer systems