

In addition to the traditional housing roles, most landlords also employ a range of other non-housing specialists. These employees provide other skills and experience which are essential in order to run a business effectively.

This makes the variety of different opportunities that are available in the housing sector even broader. If you are just starting out, you could think about pursuing any of the following career paths. These will give you transferable skills that you could use in many different industries, although by choosing housing you are also choosing to work in a sector that makes a positive difference to communities and to people's lives.

Customer services

A growing number of social landlords have a customer service centre to handle the majority of their day-to-day interactions with tenants – both in person, online and on the phone. This will include things like dealing with requests for repairs and taking rent payments.

For many people, a customer service centre is a great entry point into housing as it is not always necessary to have prior experience of working in the sector. Many landlords are looking for individuals who:

- are personable
- are good at working with people
- have good IT skills
- have experience of working in a customer service environment

Ethos and values are also often particularly important and many organisations look for individuals who share their values when recruiting to these kinds of roles.

Business improvement

Social landlords are continually striving to improve the services that they offer to their tenants. Many employ officers specifically to drive this improvement.

This might include:

- setting up systems to monitor performance across the organisation, and analysing and reporting on this data
- carrying out research to inform the organisation's plans
- developing policies and strategies which determine the organisation's response to particular issues or challenges

You'll need to be an analytical thinker with the ability to work independently and to rigorously interrogate data to form sound conclusions. You'll also need good written communication skills.

Finance

Most social landlords also employ finance professionals to help them to manage their accounts. In practice this might include processing the organisation's day-to-day spending, monitoring budgets and preparing financial reports.

Accountancy is a skilled role and it is likely that you will need qualifications and to become a member of a professional body to pursue a career in this area. There are a range of different professional bodies available and their websites contain more information on career options. These include:

- [The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy](#) (CIPFA)
- [The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants](#) (CIMA)
- [The Association of Certified Chartered Accountants](#) (ACCA)

Human resources (HR)

HR is a vital function in any business. HR professionals ensure that the organisation has the right people, with the right skills, doing the right jobs, in order for the organisation to flourish.

In practice this might mean, for example:

- supporting managers to attract and recruit new people into vacant posts
- supporting employees to access training and development opportunities
- ensuring that any issues around individual performance, attendance or conduct are dealt with both fairly and effectively

HR is another skilled role, and so to pursue a career in this area you may want to consider completing a relevant qualification and becoming a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). Although as a way in to the sector, administrative/assistant roles which do not require specific qualifications may also be available in larger organisations.

There are a number of ways in which you can become a qualified practitioner in this area, including via an apprenticeship or a graduate training scheme. More information on careers in HR and how to get qualified is available via the [CIPD website](#).

Marketing and communications

Many larger social landlords employ dedicated teams to manage their communications with their residents and other key groups. On a day-to-day basis this might include curating content for the organisation's website and newsletters, co-ordinating their use of social media and managing relationships with the local press.

More information about the skills and experience needed to pursue a career in marketing and communications is available via the [Chartered Institute of Marketing's](#) (CIM) website.

Other opportunities in housing



Chartered
Institute of
Housing

Information technology (IT)

Like most business, social landlords rely heavily on technology to carry out their day-to-day work. Many will employ IT specialists to ensure the smooth running of the business by maintaining vital hardware and software, fixing problems and supporting staff to make proper use of their systems.

In addition some social landlords are making substantial changes to the way that they operate, including delivering more and more of their services digitally. This means that there is often also a demand for skilled professionals to work on projects to deliver new computer systems and websites.

The professional body for IT professionals is the [British Computer Society](#) and more information about pursuing a career in IT is available via their website.