

GLA Building Safety Team

Quick Fire Questions about working in the team

Jevais, Senior Programme Officer

What does your role involve?

My primary role within the Building Safety Fund (BSF) is to work with building owners to submit their funding application to the BSF. This requires regular meetings with these building owners to understand the building project, the needs of the building owner whilst providing advice across the different elements of the BSF. It involves liaising with a broad spectrum of stakeholders which can include the building owner's project team, consultants, legal advisors and the government.

What is your background and what brought you to City Hall?

My background includes working in project management for a local authority, specifically liaising with the residents and buildings owners affected by unsafe cladding. Moving to work at City Hall was particularly appealing because as part of the BSF I'm able to represent London on this issue, whilst making a direct contribution to the removal of unsafe cladding through each funding agreement that I work on.

How does your work impact Londoners?

There are countless stories regarding the plight that leaseholders are experiencing as a result of the cladding crisis which has left them financially challenged whilst having detrimental effects on their wellbeing. By working on the BSF, I feel that I can help alleviate some of these pressures and directly contribute to fixing an issue that is affecting thousands across the London.

What keeps you here?

As our role covers a broad range of areas that involve the built environment and I am learning something new every day! This makes for a really stimulating work experience that's made better by an incredibly friendly, helpful and knowledgeable team.

Lorraine, Senior Programme Officer

What does your role involve?

I have responsibility for a portfolio of buildings in London with dangerous non-ACM cladding. I work with building owners and their representatives to access the Building Safety Fund. It requires working in detail with them through the application process, making sure that information provided meets the requirements for a successful application, and monitoring the progress of works. As all buildings differ the level of support also differs, and we have access to expertise across the team to draw on so that applications progress quickly and efficiently.

What is your background and what brought you to City Hall?

I have worked across various sectors in social housing and more recently in facilities management. This role is a good hybrid of both, and lets me use my skills and knowledge in both areas.

How does your work impact Londoners?

We have all heard on the news the difficulties that many leaseholders are facing living in properties where they are trapped because the building is deemed unsafe. I believe this job will make a real difference to their lives, working with applicants through the process so that leaseholders can live in homes that are safe and not to have to face huge bills to get there.

What keeps you here?

I have very recently joined the GLA but plan to stay for a good long while! I am just getting to know my colleagues and everyone has been incredibly welcoming, friendly, and genuinely willing to help me become more familiar with what the role involves. The induction is really detailed and having changed jobs during the pandemic, the GLA has excellently developed the full suite of online tools to get you embedded into your role. I look forward to getting stuck into my role but also to exploring some of the enhancements on offer through staff networks / groups and giving back to communities through volunteering opportunities.

Sam, Senior Programme Officer**What does your role involve?**

I am responsible for helping applicants to secure public funds for the remediation of unsafe non-ACM cladding on their building. During this time, I've developed my skillset and had the opportunity to work with different stakeholders, including building owners, project teams, as well as colleagues across the Housing & Land Directorate and at Homes England and DLUHC. The work is an enormous collaborative effort and I really enjoy working across multiple organisations to achieve a common goal.

What is your background and what brought you to City Hall?

I have worked in the Building Safety team as Senior Programme Officer for around 15 months. Before joining the Building Safety Team, I worked across other areas within Housing & Land, including Housing Mobility & Rough Sleeping.

What keeps you here?

The work is interesting, challenging and incredibly rewarding as it has a direct impact on the lives of thousands of Londoners. My colleagues are incredibly supportive. Despite the challenges of working from home, we regularly share knowledge and experiences so that others across the programme can benefit. I have both the autonomy and flexibility to manage my own work, and there are always opportunities to get together with colleagues for joint working. I feel valued and respected as part of the team and I am encouraged to contribute to the design of the Fund: including challenging existing processes and introducing new ways of working. The Housing & Land directorate is full of dynamic and intelligent people who care about their work and those around them.

Patrese, Senior Programme Officer (previously Programme Officer)**What does your role involve?**

During my time on Waking Watch Relief Fund (WWRF) I worked as a Programme Officer. It involved monitoring and providing information on programme performance and budgets, as well as responding to enquires and working with our legal and technical advisors. It's a dynamic role and gave me the chance to work with the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities, and influence processes and procedures in the administration of the fund.

What is your background and what brought you to City Hall?

I do not have a technical background in building safety, I have a BSc degree in Social Policy with Government. I joined City Hall as a Futures Associate working within the Strategic Projects and Property Team. What attracted me to the GLA and the Housing & Land directorate was the work it does to respond to London's housing crisis.

How does your work impact Londoners?

As a Programme Officer I was helping building owners to enter into contract and draw down funding, which means the need for costly Waking Watch patrols in buildings with unsafe cladding is reduced or removed. I was also able to help the public who contact the GLA around concerns over building safety by signposting to where or how they can access further support and information.

What keeps you here?

One of the most rewarding aspects of working in the team is knowing that your work is helping individuals across London. A strong emphasis is placed on personal development and development opportunities within the team and wider directorate, and there are always opportunities to volunteer.

Amy, Programme Manager

What does your role involve?

I have recently become a Programme Manager after starting in the Building Safety Team as a Senior Programme Officer (SPO). As an SPO I looked after a portfolio of buildings with applicants applying for funding from the government's Building Safety Fund. This involved establishing and building relationships with building owners, their representative and their design and construction teams to help them progress their funding applications as quickly and accurately as possible. Every project and team are different which makes the role varied and really interesting. This variety allows you to build an in-depth understanding of the issues and gives you the insight to provide feedback to managers and government about how applications and the funding programme are progressing. My new role allows me to use the knowledge I have gained in the SPO role to help colleagues and also manage a wider portfolio of applications

What is your background and what brought you to City Hall?

My previous roles have been in architecture and affordable housing but most recently in building safety policy. I was keen to apply some of this policy experience to delivery of funding and programmes focused on remediation and resident safety. But we have people in the team from a range of different backgrounds and that really helps to share skills and experience.

How does your work impact Londoners?

Every building assisted by the GLA Building Safety Team will have a huge impact for residents. When you help an applicant progress and support them to claim funding and complete works on a building, you know that ultimately you are stopping residents from having to cover costs and in many cases allow them to move home. Most importantly you are playing a part in making the building safe and helping residents feel safe in their homes.

What keeps you here?

This is a fantastic team to work in, colleagues are supportive and friendly which really makes a difference to the working culture. The GLA has excellent flexible working policies and is committed to them. As a part-time flexible worker with caring responsibilities, moving to the GLA has really helped me obtain a work life balance particularly during the pandemic. This is the first part-time role I've had in ten years where one of my colleagues formally covers the remainder of my role so my workload is properly co-ordinated with my working hours. There's also fantastic training and development opportunities with multiple options for getting involved in the wider work of the GLA.