

CASE STUDY



Paula Caunt **Senior Income** **Recovery Officer** **Longhurst Homes**

Paula joined Longhurst Homes 12 years ago, in 1996 after completing an Honours degree in geography and a post-graduate diploma in IT at Aberystwyth University, and following work at a Consultancy Company and the Probation Service.

Paula's first role was as a full-time generic Housing Officer, working in the South Holland area. This involved re-letting empty properties and dealing with breaches of tenancy such as non-payment of rent and anti-social behaviour. During this time, Longhurst funded Paula on a three year day release Housing Degree at De Montfort University in Leicester. This subsequently enabled Paula to complete the Chartered Institute of Housing Qualification.

After being off work for 6 months maternity leave in 2003, Paula returned to work part-time, focussing on rent payments. In September 2005 Paula applied and was successful in becoming a Senior Housing Officer, increasing her responsibility within the Boston team.

In 2006/7 Paula applied and was successful in undertaking the Longhurst Group's internal Leadership, Life and Learning Human Relations course which coincided with my new role of Senior Income Recovery Officer and the establishment of the Income Team. This is a centralised service, which manages rent payments for tenants and shared owners for our whole operational area of Norfolk, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire. Paula manages a team of 8 Income Officers and Advisers who monitor rent payments, provide advice on benefits and debt, work with many agencies to maintain successful tenancies and Longhurst Homes Just Rewards incentive scheme.

Longhurst have been an excellent employer – they have funded my further learning, fantastic commitment to staff training, professional, flexible and caring employer.