



A FUTURE WITHOUT
DOMESTIC ABUSE



Community Domestic Abuse Practitioner

Candidate Brief
September 2026

Welcome

We began the latest chapter of our journey in April 2025 when we were recommissioned to provide all domestic abuse services in mid, west, and north Essex. With the commissioned services now including our amazing services for children and young people - it now means that we have several years security for all our services.

We are dealing with an ever-rising demand on our services, but we continue to have ambitious plans for how we can expand our services. Our recent success in achieving additional funding means that we are now looking to expand across all our services to enable us to support those who need us.

Our work is all about supporting individuals who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse. We understand the power that simply believing, and offering a non-judgmental, trauma-informed response, can have. We all work together in the shared belief that every single person has the right to live their life free from domestic abuse and our practitioners work tirelessly to support and advocate for our clients to help them achieve this.

We have a brilliant team of people, providing amazing, life-saving services and as part of our current expansion, we're looking for someone to join our amazing DAP team.

If this role sounds like it's the right challenge for you, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Beverley Jones

CEO



About Next Chapter

Next Chapter was established in 1975, on the back of the second wave of feminism just as domestic violence was being formally recognised as a crime and the first legislation (Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act 1976) dedicated to combatting domestic violence was enacted.

Initially called Colchester Women's Aid, following the establishment of the Women's Aid Federation, and more recently Colchester & Tendring Women's Refuge, the decision to change our name to Next Chapter was in recognition of our much wider remit, not least our move to support male victims, and our collective desire to provide the organisation with an identity that reflected our aspirations and values.

Next Chapter is now a widely respected and valued provider of expert, specialist domestic abuse services. Our practitioners have worked hard to help us build our strong reputation for delivering expert specialist services in a professional, but compassionate and trauma-informed way, working in partnership wherever we can to help achieve the very best possible outcomes for our clients.

Read more about our vision, mission and values on pages 4 and 5.

“ We have been humbled by the work Next Chapter are doing to support victims in traumatic situations, and we salute the team at Next Chapter who are listening to the stories and doing their utmost to support those in these difficult times.

Alex Patterson, Head of Business Partners
Active Digital

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Working at Next Chapter

Next Chapter is a focused and responsive organisation that thrives on partnership working and a deep passion for supporting victims of domestic abuse, advocating for the most vulnerable in our society and challenging decisions, systems and individuals that create barriers to our clients achieving safety or impacting their wellbeing as they work towards their life free from domestic abuse.

Our staff are committed to and positive about the difference we make to people's lives. We're building links with our communities to shine a light on the hidden harm of domestic abuse and to build capacity in a range of organisations and individuals to recognise the signs of DA and to have the confidence to offer help and know where to refer for specialist support.

“ Fantastic team of staff in all areas of the organisation, all supportive of one another and want to work towards our main goals of helping survivors be free

Domestic Abuse Practitioner ”

We work with survivors of domestic abuse to help them make choices **to reclaim their lives** and begin their next chapter

**A FUTURE WITHOUT
DOMESTIC ABUSE**



A world where everyone can live safely, with dignity and respect, free from domestic abuse and sexual violence

our vision

The Next Chapter (East of England). We work across the areas of Tendring, Colchester, Maldon, Chelmsford, Braintree and Uttlesford, providing free and confidential services to support people who are currently experiencing, or have previously experienced domestic abuse.

our mission

Grounded in the voices of survivors and the strength of our communities, we empower individuals and families to rebuild their lives, free from harm, fear and injustice. Working collectively toward a safer, more equitable future for all. We advocate boldly for lasting change to end domestic abuse and sexual violence.



our values

Courageous

We are brave and have strength for the people we support. We empower them to have a voice and where they are unable, we will speak the truth and advocate on their behalf. We will protect our women-only spaces and challenge violence against women and children in all its forms.

Trustworthy

We will develop trusting relationships, providing an emotionally and physically safe environment for the people we support. We will be honest, respectful, and reliable. We will always do the right thing and do what we say we will.

Inclusive

We are diverse, welcoming, approachable, and inclusive as employers, service providers and people. We promote unity, fairness, and respect; challenging ourselves to remove barriers and ensure equal access for those who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised.

Responsive

The people we support are at the heart of all we do. We ensure the support we provide is flexible and tailored to the needs of individuals. We are collaborative, understanding, compassionate and sensitive.

Exceptional

We are proud to be experts in our field, striving to always be the best we can be, to innovate, lead and to exceed expectations. We are committed to developing and skilling our staff to the highest standards and to being generous with our knowledge to increase awareness and understanding across our partner organisations.

Communication

We value each other's knowledge and opinions and understand the benefits of positive and constructive communication. We listen and hear each other, adapting our style and language to the needs of the individual.

Teamwork

We value and respect each other and celebrate our differences. We know that we are always stronger, happier and more effective when we work together. We strive to always support each other and learn from each other.





“

All the time that domestic abuse exists, individuals will need us to help make safety possible. With our support they are empowered to reclaim their lives and choose the next chapter in the future they want.

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Current and Future Priorities

- To achieve a strong, positive and consistent culture across all services, to build the environment where our people can be the best they can through regular and meaningful staff engagement, and the development of a linked set of behaviours, consistent use of our Performance Management framework, and the development of our People Strategy.
- To be recognised and valued as the “go-to” expert specialist provider of DA services in mid, west and north Essex by seeking out opportunities and platforms to increase the visibility of our services, increasing our specialist qualifications and expertise within teams, and developing an engagement and marketing strategy to actively promote our specialist services, quality of outcomes for our clients and the impact of our services.
- To deliver consistently high-quality specialist and inclusive services from crisis through to recovery by actively seeking meaningful participation from survivors to shape service delivery and remove barriers, undertaking gap analysis and reshaping services where appropriate by establishing funding streams or strategic partnerships to deliver “recovery” services, and developing and maintaining partnerships with organisations representing marginalised communities.
- To increase the medium-term security of non-commissioned services by developing strategic relationships and alliances with key funding bodies, developing a strategic approach to impact and outcomes reporting as well as research projects to support funding applications, and developing a strategic approach to horizon-scanning for funding opportunities.
- To develop and grow the range of strategic and operational partnerships by developing organisational skills and behaviours relating to positive partnership working and developing a strategic partnership register with action plan to shape our approaches.
- To increase our ability to influence attitude, policy and practice at a local, regional and national level by generating opportunities for NC to speak & lobby and by developing our own position and stance on current issues facing the sector.



[/Visit our websites/](#)

<https://www.thenextchapter.org.uk>

<https://men.thenextchapter.org.uk>

<https://nest.thenextchapter.org.uk>

our services

Refuge
and
Recovery

with specialist support

Community
Support

with domestic abuse
practitioners and IDVAs

with practitioners
and support workers

Children &
Young
Persons
Service



The Role

We are proud that our main focus remains to ensure that as much of our funding as possible goes towards our frontline services to maximise the support we can provide. We know that our sole purpose is to support individuals who are experiencing domestic abuse, and this is delivered through our frontline teams – that makes you the most important people in our organisation.

Purpose of the role

You will be responsible for providing high-quality specialist front-line domestic abuse support to people living in the areas we cover, working with colleagues and other statutory and voluntary agencies to assist our clients to access support and help keep them safe, to rebuild their lives.

You will also be responsible for helping to develop good working partnerships and relationships with other voluntary and statutory agencies, as well as local and national specialist agencies working within the local community. We look to all our practitioners to work with those agencies to increase staff awareness and to increase confidence, skills and knowledge in relation to domestic abuse.

This is a great opportunity for individuals who are committed to helping survivors to break the cycle of domestic abuse and support their recovery.

Main responsibilities

- Work as part of the Community Outreach Team to manage all referrals both in person and over the phone to deliver an initial need and risk assessment with the client within the specified timescales initiating plans to manage and address risks, needs and immediate safety.



Main responsibilities (continued)

- Provide a needs led, trauma informed approach to provide support to clients and their children, delivering an individually tailored structured support plan. Ensure the support plans are regularly reviewed to ensure it reflects their current situation and priorities.
- Ensure clients have in place, and continuously review with them, robust safety support plans to support them living safely within their current community.
- Work closely with external partner agencies, advocating on behalf of the client to meet their individual support needs where those needs are specialist e.g. Mental Health, Substance Misuse, Legal, referral to MARAC and Social Care. Signpost and support clients to access community-based services.
- Support clients to build their resilience and future opportunities by encouraging engagement with various programmes provided inhouse or by community partners.
- Maintain timely, accurate and confidential records, ensuring all referral and support information is recorded using the On Track case management system. Ensure that all mandatory information is captured via the On Track system and any relevant monitoring information is maintained and kept up to date.
- Ensure that all safeguarding measures are delivered in respect of our clients and their children and that you adhere strictly to policies and procedures in respect of safeguarding adults and children at risk.
- Effectively manage a case load, ensuring each client receives a responsive and appropriate service individual to their needs.



- Participate in regular case management reviews with your line manager based on a review of risk and abuse which feeds back into action planning to further progress, signpost or close cases. This provides feedback to your clients and agencies and informs future case management.
- Work closely with external partner agencies and voluntary organisations to promote the service, increase awareness and confidence, skills and knowledge in relation to domestic abuse referrals and where possible integrate with their services to enable better access to clients experiencing domestic abuse.
- Deliver group-based support to victims of domestic abuse to aid their recovery from the trauma of domestic abuse.
- Provide regular case studies to contribute to the production of reports, funding applications and promotional material for Senior Management, Trustees, Funders and Partners.
- Always act in a professional manner, communicating effectively, building and sustaining effective and appropriate relationships at all times with clients, colleagues and partners.
- Support and coach volunteers and students where appropriate.
- Respect and value the diversity of the community in which the service works and recognise the needs and concerns of a diverse range of clients ensuring the service is accessible to all.
- Maintain high standards of professionalism and keep abreast of current legislation, standards, best practice and maintain a focus of continuous improvement.



- Participate in the out of hours on-call rota to deliver telephone support and call-out support in the case of emergencies.
- Participate as required in the delivery of contingency plans outside of the normal shift pattern.

About You

We're looking for highly organised and self-motivated applicants who are passionate about supporting victims of domestic abuse.

Ideally you will have experience of working with victims who have experienced domestic abuse and its impacts, you will have strong casework management skills and good knowledge of trauma-informed care. You will have a knowledge of safeguarding procedures and relevant legislation.

You will also have excellent communication and advocacy skills. A friendly, flexible 'can do' attitude is essential for this role, which will also need to work within a multi-agency, partnership environment to secure the very best outcomes for our clients.

We hope you will have experience in working with risk and will understand the dynamics of risk and how to effectively mitigate risks with a robust safety plan which is devised with each client and considers their needs and circumstances.

We require you to be mobile as this is a community outreach role and therefore a valid driver's licence and access to a motor vehicle is essential.

This post is open to female applicants only as being female is deemed to be a genuine occupational qualification under Schedule 9, Paragraph 1 of the Equality Act 2010

We're hoping you might already be working for or have previous experience from:

Domestic abuse support organisations – support roles

Police/Probation – particularly working to support victims of Domestic Abuse



Social care – particularly supporting vulnerable individuals who have experienced any form of trauma.

After 6 months you will have successfully:

- Completed the mandatory induction process and associated training & learning modules.
- Completed or on track to successfully complete your probation period.
- Established positive and collaborative working relationships within our DAP team.
- Developed positive and collaborative working with colleagues in our IDVA, Duty, Refuge, CYP and Business Services teams.
- Established a positive working relationship with key partner agencies for the area you are working in.
- Developed your skills, experience and knowledge in supporting victims of domestic abuse to enable you to hold and manage a full caseload of clients.
- Developed confidence to represent Next Chapter and our Community DAP team in multi-agency meetings and to advocate for your clients.
- Developed a network of contacts within Next Chapter so you know who to go to for advice and support, particularly for issues outside your area of expertise.

What **you** can expect from us:

- A warm welcome into our Next Chapter family
- A genuine interest in you and what you bring to Next Chapter
- A deeper understanding of the support available for women, men and children who are experiencing or have previously experienced domestic abuse
- A commitment to equal opportunities and an inclusive environment which celebrates difference and allows our staff to flourish
- Opportunities for personal and professional development
- A commitment to your wellbeing, with a range of benefits including Benenden Healthcare, flexible working, a generous leave allowance and an enhanced occupational sick pay scheme and occupational maternity scheme

What **we** expect from you:

- Demonstrating an understanding and commitment to Next Chapter's vision and values
- Commitment to and an understanding of safeguarding best practice in relation to children and adults
- Respecting and observing professional integrity in relationships with clients, peers, and other relevant professionals
- A responsibility for your own health and safety and that of your colleagues, our clients and any visitors, a willingness to follow established systems of work
- Be committed to helping build an organisation that respects and values the diversity of all staff, making our services accessible and inclusive, regardless of a person's protected characteristic
- Treat all information as confidential and comply with appropriate policies
- To seek learning opportunities to improve and broaden your knowledge and skills

a shared commitment



Terms and conditions

Contract	This is a full-time 12-month fixed term contract.
Salary	£26,821 - £30,011 per annum depending on qualifications & experience.
Benefits include	Contributory Pension Scheme: Equipment and support to work from home effectively; Learning and development tailored to your level of experience.
Hours	Standard hours are 7.5 per day, with our normal working hours between 9am – 5pm. Due to the nature of the role, you may be required to work flexibly to fulfil your role successfully. There is no overtime allowance but time off in lieu (TOIL) may be taken in agreement with your line manager and in accordance with organisational procedures.
Leave	Paid annual leave for 25 days per annum, plus 8 public holidays pro rata.
Expenses	You will be reimbursed all reasonable expenses which are incurred by you in the proper performance of your duties.
Location	Next Chapter premises are in Colchester, and your place of work will ordinarily be one of these locations, with the option for homeworking for a proportion of time. You may be required to attend meetings in other locations as may be reasonably required in order to fulfil your role successfully.
Occupational Sick Pay Scheme	1 week full-pay during your probation period. After successful completion of probation period, 12 weeks full-pay, and 12 weeks-half pay in any 12-month period.
Notice period	4 weeks' notice is required.



To apply for the position of Domestic Abuse Practitioner please complete our application form using the following link.

<https://forms.office.com/e/b41z7T2Mkz>

Please also complete our voluntary monitoring form to help us meet the aims of our equality policy.

<https://forms.office.com/r/UN7CEQb882>

Closing date for applications

Thursday 15th October

Interviews

Thursday 22nd October

If you would like an informal conversation to discuss this role further, then please contact Nicola Taylor (nicolat@thenextchapter.org.uk) to arrange a call.

how to apply

Community
Domestic Abuse
Practitioner





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<https://www.thenextchapter.org.uk>

A photograph showing a top-down view of a paved surface. The words 'PASSION LED US HERE' are painted in large, bold, red capital letters across the middle of the frame. At the bottom of the image, the tips of a person's feet wearing dark sneakers are visible. The ground is light-colored and shows some shadows and texture.