Job Description

Position:	Community Connector (2 positions available)
Hours of Work:	Full time, 37hrs per week (subject to Four Day Week scheme following 6-months in post, more info here)
Status:	Fixed term to 30th November 2028, with extension subject to funding
Leave:	25 Days per annum plus Bank Holidays
Location:	Norwich-based, with regular travel across Norfolk
Salary:	£27,686 per annum
Application Deadline:	3rd January 2027
Interviews:	Week commencing 11th January 2027

Vision statement:

Our vision is of vibrant and strong communities where everybody can live independent, safe and happy lives.

Purpose:

The Community Connector will help people across Norfolk get the support they need before financial hardship becomes a crisis. Working in trusted community venues, they will engage residents who may be struggling with money, welfare, housing, employment or other pressures but are not currently receiving effective support. They will take time to understand people's circumstances, provide practical guidance and initial support, and help them access the services they need to regain stability and independence.

Community Connectors will build relationships with local organisations, staff and volunteers, develop regular outreach sessions and help community partners recognise the wider problems that may be affecting residents. They will get to know each area, identify gaps in local provision and work with partners to overcome barriers to accessing help, particularly in rural communities.

Working closely with Future Projects' established support team and other local services, they will make sure people can access more in-depth help when needed, rather than being left to navigate unfamiliar systems alone. The aim is to address the underlying causes of hardship, helping people become more financially resilient and less likely to need crisis support in future.

Context:

Future Projects is a Norfolk charity tackling poverty, deprivation and disadvantage through services spanning food and essentials, community support, health and wellbeing, employment, education and community connection. Our support teams deliver holistic, person-centred support across Norfolk, helping people overcome complex and often interconnected problems affecting their finances and wider lives.

The Community Connector roles form part of Future Outreach, a new countywide project supported by the Norfolk Crisis and Resilience Grant Programme. The two full-time postholders will each cover a geographic area of Norfolk, working in community venues and alongside local organisations to reach people who may otherwise struggle to access support. They will draw on the expertise of the Baseline team and wider Future Projects services, while developing strong referral relationships with local voluntary and statutory providers, including Norfolk's Crisis and Resilience Service. This will help build a better-connected network of local support, making it easier for residents to get the right help at an earlier stage.

Key Deliverables include:

1. Plan and deliver accessible outreach support across Norfolk, reaching people who may not otherwise seek help.
2. Build trust with residents, identify underlying causes of hardship and provide practical support to prevent problems escalating into crisis.
3. Connect residents with appropriate local and specialist services, ensuring they receive the support they need to build resilience and independence.
4. Work with community venues and local partners to strengthen support networks, overcome barriers and address gaps in local provision.
5. Monitor outcomes, identify emerging community needs and use evidence and feedback to improve services and share learning.

Person Specification: You will be someone who enjoys working with people and making a real difference in their lives. You will be able to build trust with people from different backgrounds, including those experiencing poverty, hardship or difficult personal circumstances. You will understand that people often face several interconnected challenges and will take the time to understand their needs, offer practical help and support them towards greater independence. You will be comfortable working independently across different community settings, building relationships with local organisations and helping people access support that can make a lasting difference.

Essential criteria include:

- Experience working directly with people experiencing poverty, financial hardship, social exclusion or other challenges, within a support, advice, advocacy or community-based role.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to engage people from different backgrounds, build trust and discuss sensitive circumstances with empathy and without judgement.
- Ability to understand people's individual circumstances, identify underlying needs and provide practical guidance and support, recognising when specialist advice or additional help is required.
- Good understanding of the challenges facing people experiencing financial hardship, including issues relating to welfare benefits, debt, housing, employment and barriers to accessing services.
- Experience of working with other organisations and services, including making appropriate referrals and helping individuals access and engage with the support they need.
- Ability to develop positive working relationships with community organisations, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders, working collaboratively to improve local support.
- Strong organisational and time-management skills, with the ability to plan and deliver outreach activities, manage competing priorities, maintain accurate records and work independently across different locations.
- Good understanding of safeguarding, confidentiality, professional boundaries and person-centred support, with a commitment to treating people with dignity and respect.
- Good IT and administrative skills, including the ability to use digital systems to record support provided, track outcomes and maintain accurate case notes.
- A proactive, adaptable and practical approach to problem-solving, with the confidence to take initiative and respond to the different needs of individuals and communities.

- Ability and willingness to travel regularly across Norfolk, including to rural communities where public transport may be limited.
- Commitment to Future Projects' mission, equality and inclusion, and helping people overcome hardship and build greater independence.

Strong applications will evidence the following:

- A relevant qualification or training in community support, advice and guidance, welfare rights, social care or a related field, or willingness to undertake further training.
- Experience delivering outreach services, community drop-ins or other support in informal community settings.
- Knowledge of Norfolk's voluntary, community and statutory support services, including local referral pathways and resources.
- Experience supporting people with welfare benefits, income maximisation, budgeting, housing or employment-related challenges.
- Experience helping community organisations or volunteers develop their knowledge, skills and ability to support local residents.

About Future Projects:

Future Projects is a charity founded in 2000 by two volunteers who had become increasingly frustrated by the social exclusion, poverty and lack of support available in their local community. They recognised that the issues people faced on their Norwich housing estate - one of the most deprived in the UK - could not be resolved by addressing one problem at a time in isolation.

They worked with the local community to understand its needs and ambitions and developed projects in youth work, education, media and advice. Today, we help people in difficult situations build on their strengths and capabilities and develop the skills, confidence and resilience to take control and transform their lives. We do this through practical support and opportunities spanning food and essentials, community support, health and wellbeing, employment, education, learning and skills, and community connection, voice and belonging.

Our current projects and services are organised in three distinct departments:



Detailed duties and responsibilities:

Key Deliverable 1) Plan and deliver accessible outreach support across Norfolk, reaching people who may not otherwise seek help.

- Plan, organise and deliver a regular programme of outreach and drop-in support sessions across an agreed geographic area of Norfolk, responding to local needs and demand
- Work with community venues, staff and volunteers to agree suitable locations, session times and arrangements that make support accessible and welcoming to local residents
- Develop a good understanding of the communities within the allocated area, including local challenges, demographics, existing services and barriers that may prevent residents from accessing support
- Work with local organisations and Future Projects colleagues to promote outreach sessions through community networks, printed materials, local communications and other appropriate channels
- Take a proactive and approachable role within community settings, engaging residents who may be reluctant to approach formal support services or unaware of the help available to them
- Work collaboratively with the other Community Connector and wider Future Projects teams to coordinate outreach schedules, manage workloads and adapt delivery to changing needs and priorities

Key Deliverable 2) Build trust with residents, identify underlying causes of hardship and provide practical support to prevent problems escalating into crisis.

- Build positive, trusting relationships with residents, providing a welcoming and non-judgemental environment where people feel comfortable discussing difficult or sensitive circumstances
- Take a person-centred, trauma-informed approach to understanding people's circumstances, recognising that financial hardship is often connected to wider issues affecting their health, housing, employment, relationships or wellbeing
- Identify the underlying causes of hardship and risks that may lead to crisis, taking an early-intervention approach to helping residents address problems before they become more serious
- Provide practical, initial support with issues such as welfare benefits, income maximisation, budgeting, household costs, housing and employment, working within the postholder's training and competence
- Help residents understand their options, complete relevant forms, access information and take practical steps towards resolving their difficulties, providing follow-up support where appropriate
- Recognise when individuals require more specialist or ongoing support, ensuring their needs are not overlooked and taking appropriate action to help them access further assistance
- Identify and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns, vulnerabilities and emerging risks, following Future Projects' safeguarding procedures and seeking guidance from relevant colleagues when required
- Support residents to develop the confidence, knowledge and skills to manage their circumstances more independently, reducing their risk of experiencing further hardship or crisis

Key Deliverable 3) Connect residents with appropriate local and specialist services, ensuring they receive the support they need to build resilience and independence.

- Develop and maintain a good working knowledge of relevant support services across the allocated area, including voluntary, community and statutory provision relating to welfare, debt, housing, employment, health and wellbeing
- Help residents understand what support is available and which services are best suited to their needs, taking account of individual circumstances, preferences and barriers to access
- Make appropriate referrals to local and specialist services, providing warm handovers wherever possible and helping residents engage successfully rather than simply directing them elsewhere
- Work closely with Future Projects' Baseline support team and wider services to arrange more in-depth or ongoing support where needed, including remote support for residents who cannot easily travel
- Establish and maintain effective two-way referral arrangements with Norfolk's Crisis and Resilience Service and other relevant providers, ensuring residents can access urgent crisis assistance or longer-term resilience support as appropriate
- Follow up referrals where appropriate to establish whether residents have accessed the support they need, identifying and helping overcome any barriers that have prevented successful engagement
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and organisations where residents have multiple or complex needs, helping coordinate support and ensuring individuals are not left to navigate different services alone

Key Deliverable 4) Work with community venues and local partners to strengthen support networks, overcome barriers and address gaps in local provision.

- Establish strong working relationships with community venues, local organisations, staff and volunteers, building trust and developing a shared understanding of the needs of their communities
- Work alongside local staff and volunteers to improve their understanding of financial hardship, how to recognise wider support needs and where to direct residents for appropriate help
- Build and maintain relationships with local statutory and voluntary services, encouraging collaboration and developing clear referral pathways that make existing support easier for residents to access
- Identify recurring problems, unmet needs and gaps in local provision through conversations with residents, community organisations and other partners, particularly in rural or underserved areas
- Work with local services to develop practical responses to identified needs, including arranging specialist outreach sessions, coordinated support activities or community appointment days bringing several services together
- Identify barriers preventing residents from accessing appropriate support, including transport, accessibility, digital exclusion and limited local provision, and explore practical ways to overcome them
- Contribute to identifying appropriate uses of the project's flexible development funding, working with managers and partners to develop practical solutions that improve access to support
- Help strengthen the knowledge, relationships and referral arrangements within community organisations so they are better equipped to connect residents with appropriate support beyond the lifetime of the project

Key Deliverable 5) Monitor outcomes, identify emerging community needs and use evidence and feedback to improve services and share learning.

- Maintain accurate and timely records of all support activity using Future Projects' case management database, ensuring information is complete, confidential and handled in accordance with data protection requirements
- Record residents' presenting needs, support provided, actions taken, referrals made and outcomes achieved, ensuring the service can demonstrate both the level of activity delivered and the difference made
- Monitor individuals' progress and, where appropriate, undertake follow-up contact to understand whether support has been effective, identify further needs and capture changes in confidence, financial resilience and independence
- Gather feedback from residents, community organisations and partner services to understand their experiences, identify opportunities for improvement and help shape future delivery
- Contribute to the collection of case studies, outcomes and other evidence demonstrating the impact of the project, ensuring appropriate consent and confidentiality arrangements are followed
- Monitor outreach activity, engagement and outcomes across the allocated area, working with managers and colleagues to identify where changes to delivery could improve reach or effectiveness
- Identify and share emerging patterns of hardship, barriers to accessing support and gaps in local services, helping Future Projects and its partners better understand the challenges facing different Norfolk communities
- Contribute to project reviews, monitoring reports, evaluation and shared learning activities, using evidence and frontline experience to improve delivery and strengthen community support across Norfolk

Other

- Undertake any other duties reasonably required and commensurate with the role, including supporting wider Future Projects activities and providing flexible assistance to colleagues where appropriate

This Job Description is intended to provide a broad outline of the main duties and responsibilities only. It is not exhaustive and is subject to review in conjunction with the postholder and according to future changes or developments in the charity and its services.

Job environment: This is a community-based role involving regular travel across Norfolk, working in community venues and alongside local organisations, residents and support services. Each postholder will cover an agreed geographic area, including rural communities where access to services may be limited. The role will involve independent working, regular attendance at Future Projects premises for meetings, supervision and training, and close collaboration with the Baseline team and wider services. Some flexibility may be required to accommodate community activities, outreach sessions and occasional evening or weekend work.

Supervision: The postholder will be managed by and report to the Food and Essentials Manager and will be subject to regular performance reviews and support sessions.

Line Management Responsibility: The role has no line management responsibility. However, the postholder will work closely with community organisations, staff, volunteers and other professionals to coordinate activities and strengthen local support.

Health and Safety/Safeguarding: The postholder must comply with policies and procedures relating to health and safety, security, confidentiality, data protection and safeguarding adults and children. The role involves working directly with people who may be experiencing significant hardship or vulnerability, and the postholder must be confident in recognising concerns, maintaining professional boundaries and following appropriate reporting and escalation procedures. They must also adhere to lone-working and risk-assessment procedures when delivering support in community settings.

Future Projects is committed to safeguarding children and at-risk adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share that commitment. Our primary concern is always the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults.

Future Projects will provide induction and training, including Health and Safety and Safeguarding, and will make external training available as required. All employees must complete training and refreshers as directed to ensure compliance with our procedures.

Equalities: The postholder must actively support and promote equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging. This includes ensuring that outreach activities and support are accessible and welcoming to people from different backgrounds, recognising barriers that may prevent individuals from accessing services and making reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

Future Projects is an equal opportunities employer, a Living Wage employer and a Disability Confident employer; more information is available on request.

Pre-employment checks: Appointment is subject to satisfactory checks completed before start, including proof of identity and right to work in the UK, two references including the current or most recent manager, verification of stated qualifications or experience and any DBS check appropriate to the duties of the role. Employment gaps will be discussed at interview. A criminal record does not automatically bar appointment; decisions are made case by case in line with legislation.

Applicant instructions:

- Complete the application form in full. Explain any gaps in employment; incomplete applications may not be shortlisted.

- Tailor your answers. Use the person specification and key deliverables to structure your application, using clear and outcome-focused examples where appropriate.

- References. Provide two referees, one of whom must be your current or most recent line manager. We will not contact referees without your consent or before interview or outcome.

- Reasonable adjustments. Tell us if you need adjustments for the application or interview; we are happy to help.

- Submission. Follow the advert instructions for the deadline, submission route and file format. CVs are not accepted without a completed application form unless the advert states otherwise.

- Data. We will handle your information in line with our recruitment privacy notice and data-protection requirements.