STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Name: Natalie
Role: Support Worker



Supporting Clients to Build Better Futures

Natalie joined CHESS in December 2023 as a member of the Outreach Team before progressing into her current role as a Support Worker at Hope House, our newly acquired accommodation service in Braintree.

In her role, Natalie consistently goes above and beyond for the people she supports. She is highly committed to ensuring clients receive the help they need, often making herself available outside of her working hours to ensure they can attend important appointments and access essential services.

Alongside her support work, Natalie plays a key role in delivering community initiatives in Braintree. Every Tuesday morning, she helps run the Food and More event, where people can access support services, socialise, use computers, receive housing advice, and connect with others in the local community. She also helps deliver the Wednesday Evening Community Meal, providing rough sleepers and individuals on low incomes with a hot meal, a warm and welcoming space, opportunities to socialise, and access to computers.

These events are vital in reducing loneliness, connecting people with support services, and providing opportunities for CHESS staff to make initial contact with people experiencing homelessness.

As a Support Worker, Natalie assists clients with a wide range of practical and personal challenges. This includes helping individuals join the Housing Register, apply for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Universal Credit (UC), and attend regular support meetings. She also works closely with the fundraising team to support wider organisational goals.







What Motivates Natalie

Natalie's motivation comes from seeing people succeed, engage with services, and make positive changes in their lives. As she explains, "I can't do it for them" and can only "meet people halfway." Before joining CHESS, Natalie worked in the service industry.

Reflecting on her current role, she speaks about the sense of fulfilment that comes from helping people rebuild their lives. She believes that even simple acts of kindness can make a significant difference, noting that "just giving someone a cup of tea" can change the course of someone's day, and sometimes even their life, for the better.





A Recent Success Story

One current Hope House resident, who has been supported by CHESS since May, had effectively become "lost in the system." Due to personal circumstances and other challenges, the individual had spent several years moving in and out of supported accommodation and had remained on the Housing Register for four and a half years without securing permanent housing.

Since arriving at Hope House, Natalie has worked closely with the Housing Team to ensure all required documentation was provided promptly and efficiently. As a result, the client has already viewed two properties and is now at the top of the Housing Register.

The client has shown tremendous commitment to engaging with Natalie and the support available to them. Through their own determination, combined with the encouragement, reassurance, and confidence Natalie has provided, they have made significant positive changes in their life and are now closer than ever to securing a permanent home.