

# ADEPT President's Awards 2025

Entry form

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**Phone Number** (07825) 340595

**Award category** Shaping Places for People

**Project Title** Welcome to work

**Local authority entrant** Westmorland and Furness Council

**Partner/s if applicable** we have worked with a wide range of partners

## Headline summary (150 characters max.)

W&F Council and Cumbria Tourism have delivered Welcome to Work. An innovative needs-led project to tackle significant issues in our tourism sector.

**Please note we need at least one supporting image per award submission. Upload your image/s below.**



## Shaping places for people: How was this project an innovative response to a significant concern? (150 words max.)

W&F is an area of great diversity and the most sparsely populated LA in England, with stunning landscapes including Morecambe Bay, Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and north Pennines. Diversity is one of our greatest assets but also present challenges.

W&F is predicting a significant decline in our working age population between now and 2041, There is an imperative to support more people to access and return to the labour market. Nowhere is this needed more than in our visitor economy. We attracted 24m visitors in 2023 who spent £2.8bn and supported 27,775 jobs. However we have experienced crippling labour shortages. In 2023 86% of businesses were struggling to recruit with 77% struggling with lack of applicants. On average, 19% of roles in tourism businesses are vacant. This reduces the quality of the visitor experience, impacts on profitability and increases costs. 'Welcome to work' has successfully tackled some of these issues.

**Shaping places for people: Please give evidence of the quality of outcomes obtained from the project (for example improved/more efficient services, increased inclusivity for residents, futureproofing the service). (150 words max.)**

This project gives individuals the opportunity to have meaningful/enjoyable employment - making a big difference to their employer and gaining new skills themselves. These cohorts include:

- Economically inactive people
- People living in economically/socially deprived areas
- NEET young people
- Refugees
- Ex-offenders
- Individuals with SEND/physical/mental health conditions
- Those living in remote rural areas

The project helps businesses meet staffing requirements and then retain staff.

it focusses on three core areas:

1. Training for businesses on the Disability Confident Scheme helping people with disabilities access the labour market.
2. Matchmaking people with vacancies through Cumbria Tourism's job/employee matching service the Tourism Talent Hub
3. Preventing young people becoming NEET by promoting the visitor economy as a career path

Since 2023 it has made a real difference in our communities:

- 314 people supported to engage in job-searching
- 86 subsequently supported into employment in the visitor economy

**Shaping places for people: Please give evidence of the level of collaboration between place and people services (both within the council and with external partners/providers). (150 words max.)**

Cumbria Tourism (C/T) and Westmorland and Furness Council had previously worked with partners such as the Department for Work & Pensions, Inspira, Centre for Leadership Performance, Furness Education & Skills Partnerships, local Colleges and the University of Cumbria. It was clear that with a super-ageing population and significant housing availability and affordability challenges the area needed to look at how we maximise the people and talent we have. This required a new innovative approach to sit alongside the great work that partners do every day to encourage people into employment. Taking a sector focussed collaborative approach means that through this project working with all partners the project has helped SMEs to thrive, as well as helping those who are currently out of work to seek suitable employment, not as a stop gap but as a long-term career.

**Shaping places for people: Please give evidence of the level of buy-in to the project or its goals from members of the local community, health and social care and external organisations. (150 words max.)**

This project's success has been C/T's strong businesses engagement, both with the visitor economy businesses and partner organisations who help reach the people we are trying to help. W&F council has established strong partnerships with communities and also active work programmes to support young people.

Some key Partners/activities were:

- Growing Well - a local charity, helping those with mental health challenges. Two full day workshops gave 12 companies the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge about helping people with mental health challenges to thrive in their workplace.
- Right to Work - working with people with disabilities. The 'Career Showcase' day included a talk from the Lake District National Park Authority about the jobs available and a chance to go on Zip World treetop adventure
- Prison & Probation Service - C/T has successfully worked with the Cumbria & Lancashire Prison Group to help those leaving prison to find work and preventing them from reoffending

**Shaping places for people: Please give evidence of the use or consideration of new sources of investment to fund projects. (150 words max.)**

Westmorland & Furness Council is committed to tackling these acute issues which have a significant

impact on the local economy.

The Council awarded £132,701 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in September 2023 to Cumbria Tourism, our Local Visitor Economy Partnership, to undertake this innovative and needs-led partnership project which has delivered real, measurable results to all involved.