

# COPELAND WORK AND SKILLS PARTNERSHIP



## Copeland Work and Skills Programme Review 2020/21

# BUILDING MOMENTUM



# Copeland Work and Skills Partnership Programme Review 2020 - 2021

The second year of the Copeland Work and Skills Programme 2019-2022 is now complete. This year has presented a number of challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, but we are delighted to report that momentum of the programme has been maintained despite numerous lockdown periods.

Collaboration within the Partnership has remained strong with some excellent shared working, particularly through our sector development and bespoke support initiatives. We have continued to support existing and new employers in recruitment, during a very difficult time for the business community. A real positive step has been the inroads made in engaging with the Nuclear Supply Chain in developing initiatives to support our local unemployed residents.

Thanks to our funders (Copeland Community Fund and Sellafield Ltd), we have the flexibility in this programme to continue to 'think outside of the box' in terms of programme delivery. This has helped us pilot different activities and introduce Copeland residents to different sectors including low carbon and digital.

Although there is further work to do, and no doubt ongoing challenges to face, the Copeland Work and Skills Partnership continues to evolve collaboratively and we are confident we can reach the goals set out at the start of the programme.

**Chris Cunliffe and Carol Pugh**  
*Copeland Work and Skills Programme Team*

## Achievements 2020/21

In total, 135 individuals have been directly supported with employment and training opportunities during year 2 of the programme.

17 Individuals from Copeland have commenced an apprenticeship at either Level 2 or 3.

45 Individuals from Copeland are more "job ready" through completing Sector Development initiatives.

27 Individuals from Copeland have overcome barriers to employment or training through accessing the Employability Fund.

5 Staff from partnership organisations have completed a National Vocational Qualification in Advice and Guidance.

30 Individuals from Copeland have now increased workplace skills and practical experience through engaging with the Wage Subsidy scheme.

11 Individuals from Copeland are better prepared to apply for jobs through accessing the bespoke support activities.

31 Individuals from Copeland have received employment offers.



# Supporting Copeland Residents during Lockdown

During a COVID-19 lockdown, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Work Coaches requested support from the Copeland Work and Skills Programme, for young people experiencing significant increases in their anxiety in relation to moving forwards and seeking employment.

In collaboration with DWP Work Coaches, Better Bodies UK and facilitators of the Copeland Work and Skills Programme, a bespoke package of support was designed, developed, and delivered online as a pilot programme to six young people. The programme was called 'Coping with Covid.'

Sessions included exploring and understanding the effects of fear, stress and anxiety on emotions, social skills, physiology and mental health, along with support on how to use various tools and strategies to manage personal and work-related situations.

Participants reported that they found the support useful in helping them feel more relaxed and confident about setting goals and seeking work. Successfully, one participant moved into employment.

*Claire McQueen of Better Bodies said: "It is always an absolute pleasure to see learners begin a programme with ourselves, and succeed, but this particular programme really brought a sense of achievement for everyone. When you take into consideration the barriers some of them have, we had 100% attendance and weekly engagement. It was a great opportunity and one of which they all grasped with both hands."*

Cumbria Youth Alliance (CYA), like many of the Copeland Work and Skills Partnership members, found that the COVID-19 lockdowns had a negative impact on young peoples' social interaction, confidence, mental health, motivation, and engagement.

A small group of residents of The Foyer, Whitehaven, were able to meet regularly with a CYA key worker. With the support of laptops provided through the Employability Fund, they were able to access and embrace online learning modules, covering mental health, emotional resilience, work-based sector specific learning, and supported job search.



*Young people at Whitehaven Foyer benefitting from accessing IT equipment through the Employability Fund*

*Key worker John Dixon from CYA said: "This is a good way, of getting young people with little or no motivation together, to re-engage with learning in a relaxed setting."*

*Tony Bennett, one of the recipients of a laptop, said: "I have always had issues with attending sessions where education and learning have been involved. Who would have thought I would be sat in a room learning!"*

# Supporting Copeland Work and Skills Partners with Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) qualifications

## Kay Dempsey

Kay Dempsey, Choices Team Leader for Groundwork NE & Cumbria achieved IAG Level 4 as part of the Copeland Work and Skills Programme.

*Kay said:* "Undertaking the IAG Level 4 gave me the opportunity to review and refresh my skills and to research more up to date knowledge and techniques. The professional discussions with my Assessor were very useful and gave me reassurance.



Now that I am qualified at IAG Level 4, I have been able to deliver IAG Level 2 to a small number of learners, mainly participants and ex-participants of the Choices programme. Several of these learners are volunteers working for Third sector organisations and I feel confident that they in turn are able to give information, advice and guidance in an appropriate manner as part of their volunteering role. This will also improve their future employment opportunities."

## Claire McQueen

Claire McQueen proprietor of Better Bodies UK completed the IAG Level 4 qualification in 2020.

*Claire said:* "From commencement of the course it began to highlight areas to me, in where we could improve the service that we are providing to both our learners and partnerships. Whilst we are a training provider, we spend a lot of time with some of the learners and when they are referred to us it is always part of a journey into employment for them.



As part of that journey, we speak to them about their current aspirations, why they are on specific programmes and their future aspirations regarding careers. I felt it was an important part of the support that we offer as a company that we put this guidance into a more official capacity and since completing the course we have made changes to the business."

# Sector Development

## Recruitment Support to the Health and Social Care Sector



*Above: Mary Ochal, a successful participant on the Sector Based Work Academy (SBWA)*

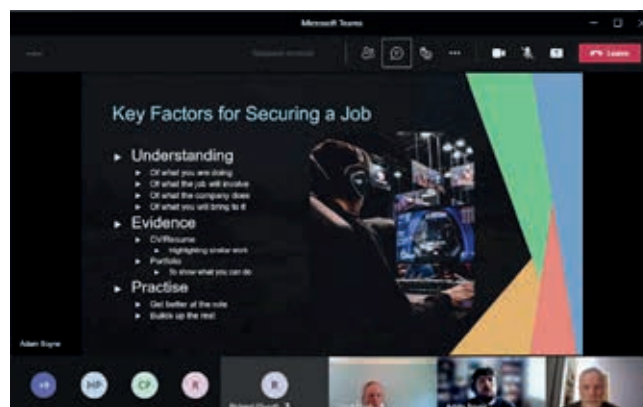
During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Copeland Work and Skills Partnership supported Wyndham Manor Care Home in Cleator Moor with a Sector Based Work Academy.

Led by Inspira, training was delivered digitally and included: nutrition and hydration, dementia and stress awareness, health and safety in the workplace, person-centred approach, dignity in care, COVID-19 awareness, handling information/confidentiality and employability skills.

Unemployed Copeland residents were offered employment in a variety of roles including Support Workers, Domestic Assistants, and Kitchen Assistants.

*Deborah Naylor, Area Operations Manager at Inspira, said: "We are delighted to have co-delivered this innovative project with key partners. It benefits people who were unemployed, a local employer and the wider community who rely on health and care workers, who contribute so much to supporting others."*

## Raising Awareness of Careers in the Video Gaming Industry



*Above: Participants, Adam Boyne from BetaJester Ltd; and organisers of the Careers in the Video Gaming Industry online session*

Working in partnership with BetaJester Ltd, unemployed Copeland residents were introduced to roles in the Video Gaming industry, the skills required to secure a role, and the type of activities required to access them.

Participants heard how it is possible to enter the Video Gaming industry after working in other sectors by using transferrable skills, and how short courses can be undertaken at home to build up a skillset, increasing their chances of being involved in the fast-growing industry.

As well as covering the obvious roles available in the industry, such as, Artist, Design, Programmer and Sound, lesser-known roles were also covered such as Quality Assurance, Marketing/PR, Content Creator and Performer. The delivery of this session also provided key tips and advice with first steps into the Video Gaming industry.

This provided a great opportunity for unemployed residents, being that digital transformation and the ambition to improve digital skills is high on the agenda in Copeland.



# Sector Development

## Raising awareness of careers in the great outdoors



*Programme participants*

Unemployed residents from across Copeland experienced a range of work-related activities, heard personal career journeys and received employment advice specific to working in outdoor environments.

The programme was supported by local employers: West Lakes Adventure, West Cumbria Rivers Trust and Lake District National Park Authority.

*Participant Caitlin Wright said: "This work scheme was super informative alongside being fun. While I mostly joined the conservation events I think that the different outdoor opportunities I got to see at West Lakes Adventure were brilliant. I learned a lot from these events and wouldn't trade these experiences for the world."*

*Participant Jack McPhillips said: "I signed up out of curiosity as someone who's searching for a career rather than a job, and the Outdoor Careers programme has definitely put me on the right track! It was a great way to get introduced to the kind of work I'd be doing within a career in conservation or outdoor pursuits and definitely expanded my knowledge of what that kind of work entails."*

*Karin Crofts Project Officer, People on the Keekle project, West Cumbria Rivers Trust: "It was great to work on the Copeland Outdoor Careers Programme – I wish we'd had this scheme when I was looking for a job! We had a fantastic day at Longlands Lake river-dipping to find out more about monitoring water quality and tackling invasive Himalayan balsam."*

*Steve Tatlock Lake District National Park Authority Ranger Team Leader (Western): "We rely on volunteers for so much of the valuable work we deliver. Those attending as part of their Copeland Work and Skills Partnership Outdoor Careers Programme were enthusiastic, engaged and very productive in their time with us, we would welcome them to join our existing volunteers."*





*Experiencing a group activity at West Lakes Adventure*



*Team building challenge at West Lakes Adventure*



*Measuring the health of river habitat with West Cumbria Rivers Trust*



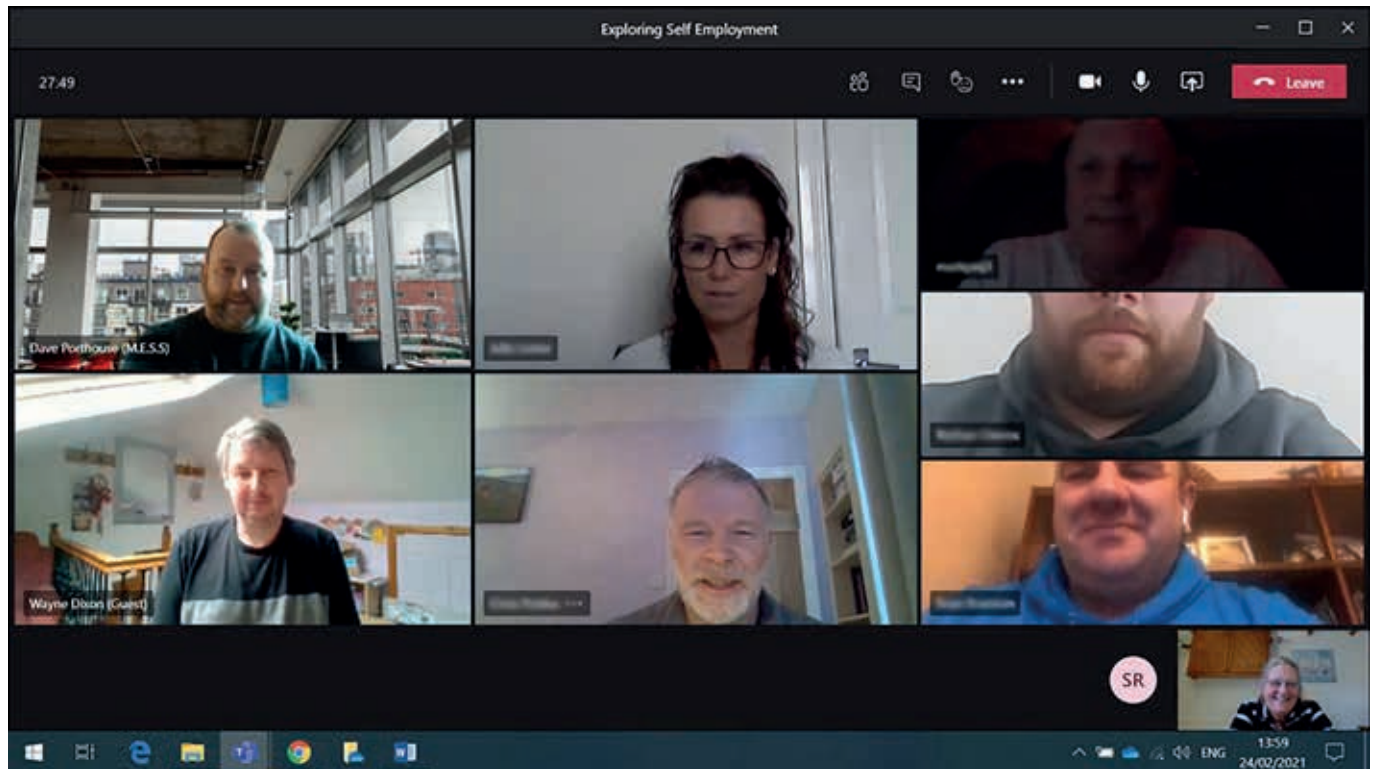
*Footpath restoration with the Lake District National Park Authority*



*Being instructed on the safe use of equipment with the Lake District National Park Authority*



# Supporting Copeland residents into self-employment



Supported by Inspira and DWP and delivered by Dave Porthouse, Director at Money, Education & Support Services, Copeland Work and Skills Partnership ran an online self-employment 'awareness raising' session, unique to the Copeland Work and Skills programme.

Attendees explored the concept of self-employment, the challenges, personal and legal requirements of being self-employed and specific aspects of running a business, to help them decide if self-employment is the way forward for them. The session ran as a forerunner to 'Entry into Self-Employment' – a longer-term programme of support delivered by Inspira and Dave Porthouse.

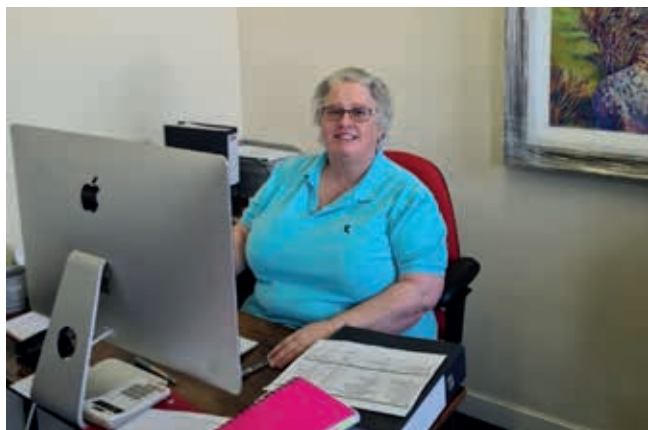
*Dave Porthouse of Money, Education & Support Services, said: "I believe many people at some point in their lives consider self-employment, but are put off by how daunting it can seem. Self-employment is about taking an idea, identifying the barriers and then looking at how to overcome them, and unless you actively take those steps to find out more about it you will never know what you don't yet know. Exploring self-employment gives people the opportunity to find out more about what it means to be self-employed"*

*Wayne Dixon, a participant at the session said: "I really enjoyed the course and found out things I didn't know about starting up as being self-employed. The session was very useful in pointing me in the right direction. Dave was a great trainer and the courses covered everything I needed to know." Wayne Dixon has since started his own business in fencing and joinery.*



# Self-employment Candidate Case Studies

## Lorraine Sweeney



Lorraine joined the Copeland Entry to Self-Employment programme in October 2020, run by Inspira and delivered alongside Money Education Support Services and Better Bodies UK.

Lorraine's vision was to run her own Virtual PA business and she wanted to understand more about the best approach to take. Lorraine previously ran her own business outside of the county some years ago, but this was a new idea and approach for her. During the programme, Lorraine learned all about business planning, marketing, budgeting, and business generation as well as gaining a Level 2 qualification in Customer Service. Lorraine has also been supported through 1-2-1 coaching and successfully launched her own business 'Omnia Virtual Business Service' on 6th April 2021.

Lorraine recently opened her business office in Cleator Moor and was supported with this thanks to funding support from the Copeland Work and Skills Partnership Employability Fund, which funded a contribution towards office rental costs, in the first 2 months.

Check out Lorraine's website and what she can offer at [www.omniavirtualpa.com](http://www.omniavirtualpa.com) or follow her on LinkedIn where you can access her popular blog.

## Anne Herbert



Anne is a talented Artist who wanted to use her skills more commercially by becoming a fully self-employed Artist. Anne joined the Copeland Entry to Self-Employment programme run by Inspira and delivered, alongside Money Education Support Services and Better Bodies UK. As part of the programme, she learned to understand the impact of self-employment on her finances, as well as looking into ways of further marketing her talents to audiences both online and around Cumbria. Following her attendance at the Copeland Entry to Self-Employment programme, Anne has registered as a full-time Artist working out of her Studio in Cleator Moor.

One of Anne's many skills is painting landscapes, particularly in and around Cumbria and the Lake District. Anne was supported by the Copeland Work and Skills Partnership Employability fund, which helped her to purchase a drone, meaning she could capture different perspectives of this dramatic landscape and improve her portfolio.

Anne's impressive body of work can be viewed on Instagram by searching for [annebh\\_art](https://www.instagram.com/annebh_art).

## Copeland residents supported by an Apprenticeship subsidy

### Olivia Bell

Olivia Bell was recruited by Toman Contracting Ltd; and worked towards Level 3 in Business Administration.

*Olivia said:* "Before starting my apprenticeship with Toman Contracting Ltd; I was a front of house apprentice at the Washington Central Hotel where I gained a qualification in Level 2 Customer Service. This is what motivated me to want to develop my skills and go down the business administration career path."



"My job role at Toman Contracting Ltd; includes reception, social media, wages/timesheets, vehicle tracker checks, logging HAV records, document control and general admin/filing."

"I am thoroughly enjoying my apprenticeship. I feel it is a great opportunity to get all this experience whilst gaining a qualification and being employed at the same time. I think studying this apprenticeship will definitely help me in terms of employability in the future as I will have so much more experience and knowledge which will be helpful when trying to secure a full-time business administration position after my apprenticeship."

### Stephen Murphy

Stephen Murphy has been working closely with the Chef at Parkside Hotel whilst completing a Commis Chef Apprenticeship Level 2.

*Stephen Murphy said:* "Since starting my role at Parkside Hotel, I have learned more about food and different ways in which to prepare or cook than I ever have anywhere else in my life. I must thank my mentor, Craig (Head Chef at Parkside), as he is excellent to learn from and we get on very well."



"As I have progressed, I feel almost fully confident that I could cook anything from our menu to the same standard as Craig would. I have found a job that I both enjoy, and learn from daily, and this is helped by the support I get from the team I work with and the owners."

*Andrew Kendall (Hotel Owner) said:* "Stephen has worked extremely hard to develop his confidence in dealing with guests and he is now in a position to offer exceptional customer service. He is enthusiastic and always eager to help with guest requests about the food contents and allergies."



## Copeland residents supported by a Wage Subsidy

### Emily Rose Adair

Emily joined Tyg Ltd; in January 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, as a Sales and Marketing Trainee. This opportunity was made possible by a wage subsidy from the Copeland Work and Skills Programme.

*Maureen Huck – Operations and Sales Manager said: "Due to COVID-19 business shut down, it was an ideal time for Emily to join Tyg Ltd, as it allowed us to drill down into various areas of the business in a less interrupted dimension. Initially Emily assisted in the implementation of the ISO quality system. This quickly demonstrated Emily's attention to detail and software application knowledge as many documents were created and filed and this was a great help" She is fully*



conversant in Microsoft applications, and works well and efficiently."

"The area that Emily excels in is marketing design. She has a flare and a great interpretation ability which is reflected in a series of 'How to Guides', and she is the lead on this project."

"Emily is a great team member, and I can see her growing in her role over a steady period of time."

### Lorna Preston

Lorna joined Cumbria Canine Services in February 2021 as a part-time Virtual Assistant.

Lorna's role involves a range of tasks; from answering enquiries, taking bookings, understanding special requests and conditions required for each dog, to organising seminars, designing social media marketing posts, and updating the website.



*Lorna said: "I'm finding the experience of working for Cumbria Canine Services, to be beneficial to all aspects of my life. As my job role requires organising customers and staff, it helps me to be more organised in my life outside of work."*

*Jodi McQuiston; the owner of Cumbria Canine Services said: "I'm really glad that I took the plunge, and thankful to the Copeland Work and Skills Programme, as I'm not sure I would have been brave enough without it."*

## Copeland residents supported through the Employability Fund

### Stephen Redshaw

Better Bodies Ltd; received support from the Copeland Work and Skills Partnership Employability Fund. This enabled Stephen Redshaw to complete the employability and construction courses he needed.

During a COVID-19 lockdown, Stephen struggled to work remotely to undertake vital course work needed to complete his qualifications, using his iPad. His Tutor, Claire McQueen of Better Bodies UK, made an enquiry to the Employability Fund for support to purchase a suitable laptop for Stephen to complete his work.



*Claire McQueen said:* "The fund was absolutely essential. Carol Pugh from the programme team responded really quickly to my enquiry and we were able to purchase a laptop for Stephen that day and have him set up for the rest of the week to complete his work. The laptop enabled Stephen to complete three courses: L1 Employability and Personal Development, L1 Health and Safety in a Construction Environment, and L1 Health and Safety in the Workplace"

"Not only has it helped support Stephen, but we are now able to set this up as a student laptop and it will go on to help others in a similar position to Stephen, both in and out of the classroom."

### Holly

After being made redundant during the first COVID-19 lockdown, Holly decided to study for a Level 7 Human Resource course to improve her chances of employment. Holly didn't have a laptop to complete this work.

Holly contacted Citizens Advice Copeland for support to access IT to complete the online assignments. With assistance from the Copeland Work and Skills Partnership Employability Fund, Citizens Advice Copeland purchased a laptop which Holly used to complete her first module towards her qualification.



*Citizens Advice Copeland Manager Shelley Hewitson said:* "We are delighted to say that Holly has now secured part-time employment. Her new employer is also supporting Holly to continue her human resource qualification."

Partnership working between Citizens Advice Copeland and Copeland Work and Skills Partnership enabled Holly to deal with her initial request for support, and the additional help she needed to be able to plan and lead a more secure and stable future.

*Holly expressed her appreciation by saying:* "Thank you, it's been a great help, I don't know what I'd have done without it."



## Copeland residents supported through the Employability Fund

### Stuart

With the support of the Employability Fund, Skills 4 You, were able to employ a Support Worker short-term to enable Stuart to maintain a place on a woodcraft programme for eight weeks.

Initially, when Stuart joined the Programme at Skills 4 You, he was supported by their Therapeutic Life Coach, and learned Mindful breathing techniques and coping strategies to help defuse potentially volatile situations. In order for him to maintain his place on the woodcraft programme, it was identified that the team at Skills 4 You and Stuart would benefit from some specialised support.



*Stuart said:* "I loved being at Skills 4 You, it has completely turned my life around." On his last day he said: "I was like a bear with a sore head when I first started at Skills 4 You. I am a better person now."

Complex needs around emotional and personal issues had become such a barrier to Stuart attending courses that he usually, in his words "got kicked off, or never returned."

Through assistance from the Support Worker over a number of weeks, Stuart was able to grow in confidence, whilst working on reducing emotional and personal barriers. He was able to develop and build on the full range of emotional and social skills needed to build and maintain relationships with his peers. This work has had a very positive impact on his overall health and wellbeing.

Stuart's confidence has increased, he now helps at home, and does grass cutting for his family and neighbours. He has taken up Rugby again, becoming the captain of the team and has started volunteering in a local charity shop.



# Pathways into Employment

## Lubomir Durik

Copeland resident Lubomir Durik successfully gained full-time employment by accessing a number of Copeland Work and Skills Partnership workstream support opportunities.

Lubomir, who is now employed by CRS Facilities Management, joined a Sector Based Work Academy (SBWA), which prepared candidates for jobs in the security industry.

During the six-week programme, Lubomir completed pre-employment skills training, practical work experience, Customer Service skills, Emergency First Aid at Work, Personal Budgeting and Security Industry Authority Training (SIA).



*Above: Lubomir undertaking SIA training with another participant on the Sector Based Work Academy programme.*

CRS were impressed with Lubomir's positive attitude to work and his commitment. With the support of the Copeland Work and Skills Partnership Employability Fund and Inspira,

Lubomir went onto gain his full SIA licence. This was a condition that CRS required prior to employment.

CRS approached the Partnership and were successful in being granted a wage subsidy through the programme. Lubomir was recruited as a Security and Safeguarding Officer for the next six months. Following the subsidy period, CRS retained Lubomir as a full-time employee.



*Above: Lubomir now employed at CRS Facilities Management.*

Gavin Henry, of CRS Facilities Management said: "Lubomir came to us as part of a Sector Based Work Academy programme. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our work force increased and with Lubomir having the appropriate training and SIA licence, we were able to recruit him and place him on a site immediately. Lubomir has been a great asset to our team, and we are happy to now have him in full-time employment with us."



# Support to the Hospitality and Tourism Sector During the COVID Pandemic

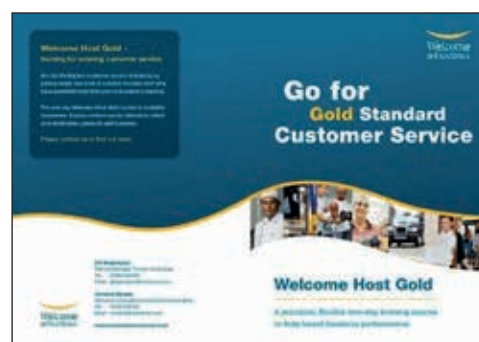


*Customer service skills are a key component of the Welcome Host Gold Course.*

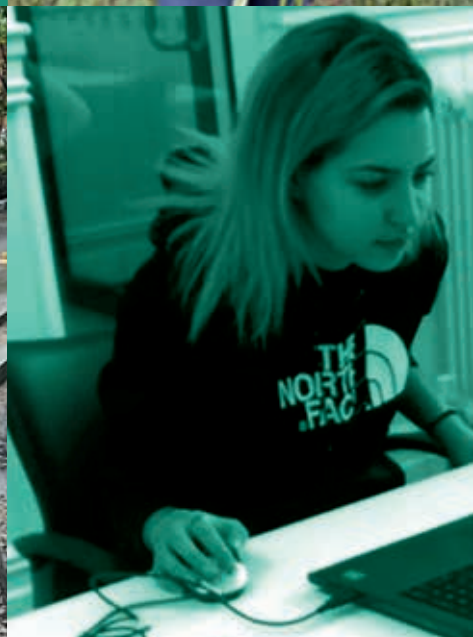
Unemployed Copeland residents were offered bespoke training courtesy of the Welcome Host Gold course. The one-day course trains people in customer services, and is considered the 'gold standard' in the Tourism & Hospitality industry. The timing of the training was crucial, as it coincided with the industry preparing to open up following COVID-19 lockdowns, and to support recovery in the Copeland business community.

Those attending the course gained the core skills needed to deliver excellent customer service. Participants learnt to: develop their communication skills, recognise customer expectations and how to meet them, understand their frontline sales and service role, tackle difficult situations and embrace the importance of teamwork.

*Katie Read, Copeland Borough Council's Tourism Sector Development Officer said:* "Welcome Host Gold is designed for front facing staff who work in the tourism, hospitality, leisure, travel and transport sectors. Participants will learn what it means to be an ambassador for your business and the place you live, work and enjoy. It will give the skills and knowledge needed to deliver excellent customer service in an ever-changing industry. It's a life skill that's transferrable throughout your career."







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