

Practical approach toolkit: Leveraging provider engagement in local skills overview

Who is the toolkit for?

It's for

- Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) teams
- colleges
- sector bodies and partners.

It helps organisations improve engagement with adult social care providers in local skills planning and offers a practical, scalable model based on Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce's (TVCC) approach to bringing employers and education partners together through a well-structured, high energy event format.

What the toolkit offers

It outlines how a festival style event can act as a catalyst for meaningful engagement, building stronger relationships across colleges, providers and strategic partners by:

- establishing a consistent, co-ordinated framework for engaging a dispersed care sector
- providing step by step guidance for designing and delivering a high impact event, from early planning to on the day facilitation
- strengthening alignment between education and employer needs by grounding activities in real workforce expectations
- showing how this approach can create long term momentum for LSIP priorities, workforce development and curriculum improvement.

Why this approach matters

Adult social care providers often lack time and capacity to engage in skills planning, and traditional careers fairs fail to show the sector's breadth. TVCC's high energy, hands on festival model brings providers, colleges and students together, shifting perceptions, strengthening relationships and generating richer insight to support a stronger future workforce pipeline.

Key features include:

- **Youth-centred event design:** A high-energy festival format uses motivational speakers, panel discussions and interactive stands to engage students and challenge outdated perceptions of adult social care.
- **Warm-network provider recruitment:** Trusted contacts through Skills for Care, care associations and colleges secure committed exhibitors and reduce last-minute dropouts.

- **Clear exhibitor expectations:** Short briefing packs and pre-event webinars guide providers to deliver hands-on demonstrations, real-task activities and professional, youth-friendly interactions.

Overarching lessons

- **Relationships drive engagement:** Warm-network outreach and trusted contacts significantly increase provider participation and reduce dropouts.
- **Youth-centred formats shift perceptions:** Interactive, high-energy experiences help students understand the value and professionalism of adult social care.
- **Clear expectations build consistency:** Setting simple standards for stand design and behaviour improves quality and ensures a more positive experience.
- **Strong co-ordination builds trust:** Regular communication, shared planning tools and clear roles help partners maintain alignment and deliver reliably.

Key takeaways

- A co-ordinated, festival-style approach can meaningfully increase provider engagement in LSIP activity.
- Warm-network recruitment generates stronger participation and better-quality stands.
- Multi-agency planning strengthens alignment, governance and delivery consistency.
- Reusable assets, repeatable timelines and mixed funding models support long-term sustainability.
- The model is adaptable and can be replicated across regions to strengthen workforce pipelines and employer-education collaboration.

You can find the full toolkit including the building blocks that shaped the approach and practical recommendations to help you adapt the model, alongside a recorded presentation on [our website](#). Together, these insights provide a clear pathway for strengthening provider engagement, aligning skills activity with employer needs, and building a more confident, better connected local skills system.