

Recommendations



Practical approach toolkit: Reaching the future workforce

These recommendations are based on proven practice and lessons learned from the Stockton-on-Tees Employment and Training Hub and Hub on Tour model. They capture what has worked well in planning, delivering and sustaining community-based employment support, skills development and sector-specific recruitment pathways. Each recommendation includes practical steps that organisations can adapt to achieve real-world impact in their own local context.

At the end of this resource, you'll find a set of materials and links to support implementation.

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Develop an area wide outreach model that increases visibility, reduces access barriers and connects people in trusted settings to structured employment and skills pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Schedule delivery sessions in well-used community locations that consistently attract local people.■ Embed rapid, simple enrolment processes, enabling people to progress immediately after contact.■ Use local demographic and engagement intelligence to prioritise neighbourhoods requiring additional support.			
Action			

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use labour-market and community insight to target areas with limited uptake, ensuring support reaches people who remain disconnected from employment services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Combine registration, health and economic data to identify important outreach priority locations. ■ Work collaboratively with Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners to verify needs emerging within specific communities. 			

Action

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Adopt dignity-first outreach practices so people choose to engage without pressure, building trust from first contact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deliver outreach in trusted community spaces (e.g. food banks, Warm Spaces and churches), allowing people seeking work to approach staff voluntarily. ■ Test a wide range of venues, then discontinue those with low engagement and prioritise locations where demand is strongest. ■ Set a predictable schedule (e.g. a fixed day each month) so people and venue partners can plan around repeat visits. 			
Action			

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Sustain delivery through a stable multidisciplinary team structured to cover outreach, employer liaison and learner support across the local area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clearly define responsibilities and expectations across all staff roles within the team. ■ Use outcome and demand data to identify when additional staffing is necessary. ■ Introduce specialist practitioner roles when persistent pressures require focused professional expertise. 			

Action
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Digital and technology	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Embed inclusive digital processes across all touch points so people can access information, register quickly and engage with opportunities regardless of confidence or device access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deploy tablets for mobile enrolment, appointment booking and immediate digital follow-up communication. ■ Ensure online resources remain simple, mobile friendly and accessible. ■ Provide guided digital support during sessions for people needing additional personalised assistance. 			

Action			

Digital and technology	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Reduce digital exclusion by offering devices, connectivity and on-site digital access, ensuring people remain contactable and able to complete recruitment tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Operate a structured device-lending and SIM-provision scheme for eligible participants. ■ Maintain free, accessible public computers for completing essential employment and training tasks. 			

Action

Digital and technology	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use simple virtual tours to help people feel more comfortable before visiting busy or unfamiliar places, making it easier for them to attend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create virtual hub walk-throughs offering realistic previews of key building areas. Ensure online resources remain simple, mobile friendly and accessible. ■ Introduce virtual orientation during outreach appointments to reduce pre-visit anxiety significantly. ■ Gather user feedback on virtual tools to drive ongoing quality improvements. 			
Action			

Digital and technology	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Ensure staff and partners co-ordinate efficiently through shared digital tools that support real-time updates and consistent work flows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Maintain accurate, live recruitment dashboards reflecting candidate progress and employer needs. ■ Use group messaging channels to resolve operational issues quickly and collaboratively across teams. ■ Store templates, schedules and guidance in shared digital repositories accessible to all partners. 			

Action			

Digital and technology	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Create a public facing ‘single source of truth’ online platform for jobs, training and support to simplify navigation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consolidate vacancies, training, careers guidance and local support into one searchable online portal. ■ Integrate clear labour market information so people understand typical roles, entry points and progression routes. ■ Include partner organisations’ offers in one place to reduce duplication and streamline referrals. 			

Action

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Secure stable core funding to maintain a long-term, high-quality employment offer, supplemented by targeted programmes supporting priority sectors and communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Protect critical staffing roles within permanent budgets to sustain reliable delivery. ■ Draw on external programme funding to enhance activities in specific priority areas. ■ Plan annual resource allocation using robust projections of demand and utilisation. 			

Action			

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Maximise cost-effectiveness by using existing community venues and central hub facilities, reducing the need for additional estate investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deliver outreach in trusted, embedded community settings with established local engagement. ■ Provide free, professional hub space for employers conducting interviews or assessments. ■ Co-ordinate promotional activity across partner networks to extend reach without additional cost. 			

Action

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Blend core funding with earned income and small external bids to strengthen long term sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Charge room hire to training providers (but keep employer access free) to generate modest, re-investable income. ■ Use targeted bids to pilot small programmes, embedding only those that demonstrate clear value and demand. ■ Use utilisation and demand data to make the case for expanding capacity (e.g. creating new rooms or roles). 			

Action			

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use data-driven business cases to justify resource expansion, demonstrating clear links between investment, capacity pressures and workforce priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Present consistent performance reporting to senior leaders using clear outcome indicators. ■ Highlight occupancy and utilisation rates to evidence operational pressure and demand. ■ Reference local workforce intelligence to support strategic proposals for new investment. 			

Action			

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Maintain flexible support funds that address immediate barriers to engagement, enabling people to progress without financial disruption:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide travel assistance enabling people to attend interviews and early employment shifts. ■ Supply essential work wear or subsistence items for people facing immediate hardship. 			

Action

Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Build a co-ordinated, multi-agency ecosystem where employers, community organisations and statutory partners work together to widen access and resolve barriers collectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Convene regular partnership forums that enable updates, collaboration and shared solutions. ■ Encourage co-location arrangements where joint working enhances outcomes for people significantly. ■ Use collaborative approaches to address complex issues requiring multi-agency involvement. 			

Action
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Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Ensure employers participate actively in designing pathways, shaping training content and engaging in recruitment activities that reflect real workforce needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gather structured employer feedback to refine curriculum and improve pre-employment learning programme delivery. ■ Offer regular in-person opportunities for employers to engage directly with people. 			

Action

Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Set and uphold an employer quality standard to ensure fair recruitment, supported starts and genuine progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pre-vet employers for supervision quality, learning value and safe working environments; decline partnership where standards aren't met. ■ Agree onboarding adjustments (e.g. phased starts, quiet pre-visits, supported ID checks) to increase successful transitions. ■ Keep employer access free but expect participation in feedback loops and a commitment to improvement. 			
Action			

Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Provide early market viability advice to new providers so services are sustainable and workforce aligned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Share insights on demand, local workforce availability and recent employer churn to help providers choose locations wisely. ■ Advise on timing and neighbourhood selection to avoid service oversupply. ■ Connect new providers early to business support, planning and property teams for smoother setup. 			

Action
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Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Maintain strong communication channels that enable quick decision-making, particularly when adapting to local operational pressures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use concise, agile communication tools to replace unnecessary lengthy meetings. ■ Establish clear escalation procedures to resolve compliance and scheduling concerns. ■ Capture real-time event insights to guide immediate operational improvements. 			

Action
Empty space for action items

Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Expand employer engagement by pro-actively identifying new partners across sectors, ensuring sufficient opportunity flow for all participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Monitor labour-market trends and emerging vacancies across multiple recruitment platforms. ■ Schedule recruitment activities that coincide with recognised sector-specific hiring cycles. ■ Maintain candidate pipelines that remain responsive to employer volume and skills needs. 			

Action
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Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Define clear governance arrangements with transparent leadership oversight, ensuring accountability, consistency and alignment with wider local strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Produce concise performance updates summarising activity, outcomes and future risks. ■ Set measurable performance indicators guiding delivery expectations across all functions. ■ Align strategic decisions with regional economic, workforce and health priorities. 			

Action			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use evidence and insight to guide decision-making, ensuring outreach, training and recruitment activities respond to measurable community patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Track registrations geographically to demonstrate reach into under served areas of the community. ■ Record attendance and throughput across all events and structured programmes. ■ Monitor employer engagement trends to assess the effectiveness of recruitment activity. 			

Action			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Co-ordinate delivery through shared planning tools and flexible scheduling methods, ensuring activity fits naturally within community rhythms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Combine routine drop-ins with responsive pop-ups for maximum flexibility and relevance. ■ Adjust schedules promptly when external factors disrupt planned delivery activities. 			

Action

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Maintain robust troubleshooting processes to ensure continuity across multiple delivery locations and partner services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assign clear operational contacts for early escalation of emerging issues. ■ Conduct debrief sessions after major activities to refine future procedures. ■ Track recurring operational challenges to inform ongoing improvement planning. 			
Action			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Co-design inclusive environments and access routes so the hub feels welcoming and reduces anxiety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Run accessibility walk throughs with disabled staff and users to identify improvements (e.g. door weight, signage, quiet rooms). ■ Maintain modern, neutral visual identity and clear way finding to avoid 'institutional' impressions. 			

Action

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Simplify recruitment work flows with employers to remove digital barriers and speed up hiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Replace complex online forms with CV based applications and quick fire interview days where suitable. ■ Digitise event processes with on the spot registration and automated follow-up. ■ Offer guaranteed interviews for programme completers where appropriate. 			
Action			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Run hyper targeted social campaigns to reach the right audiences quickly and cost effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use postcode level and demographic filters to reach priority groups and avoid retargeting existing service users. ■ Match campaign timings to community rhythms (e.g. school run windows, local events). ■ Monitor engagement and conversions to refine content and spend. 			
Action			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Stand up a rapid redundancy response protocol to protect incomes and retain skills locally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Map transferable skills quickly and organise on-site employer events within days ■ Co-ordinate with partners to align job matching, applications and interviews in one location. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Recruit individuals with strong values and motivation, supported by high-quality, sector-specific learning and a supportive environment that builds confidence and employability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deliver structured learning covering core knowledge and personal attributes essential for roles. ■ Integrate employer-led insights to ensure content remains current and relevant. ■ Encourage practical exercises and reflective tasks within supportive, small-group settings. 			

Action
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Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Strengthen retention by offering local matching, co-ordinated interview opportunities and practical support that smooths the transition into work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Align candidate strengths and preferences with appropriate local employment opportunities. ■ Minimise travel requirements through locality-based matching and supportive arrangements. ■ Facilitate onboarding through access to hub-based checks and preparatory sessions. 			

Action
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Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Embed barrier-aware support throughout the journey, ensuring personal, digital or logistical challenges do not prevent progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide targeted assistance such as subsidised travel or funded safeguarding checks. ■ Offer digital access, devices and guidance for people needing additional support. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Embed financial transition support so moving into work doesn't worsen short-term hardship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Complete better off calculations at first contact and link people to in-house or community benefits and debt support. ■ Provide practical onboarding help such as digital access and guidance through pre-employment checks. 			
Action			

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Provide opportunities for people to re-engage when ready, ensuring sustainable progression and long-term development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Allow people to rejoin programmes when their confidence or readiness improves. ■ Maintain supportive, proactive communication during periods between active engagement. ■ Celebrate achievements and milestones to reinforce motivation and continued progress. 			

Action

Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Support ongoing development by helping people build long-term skills, confidence and career direction beyond their first job, strengthening progression and retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer clear information about local training routes linked to real job opportunities. ■ Provide regular check-ins after starting work to review progress and concerns. ■ Connect people to mentors who can guide development and boost confidence. 			

Action
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Workforce	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Create inclusive support for people with additional needs by adapting learning, communication and recruitment processes, ensuring everyone can participate meaningfully:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer flexible learning methods that suit different confidence levels and experiences. ■ Work with partners to remove practical or wellbeing barriers affecting participation. ■ Provide extra preparation for people needing more time to understand workplace expectations. 			

Action			

Pilot, refinement and ebedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Run structured test–learn–scale cycles so only the most effective activities are embedded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pilot widely, then discontinue low-impact venues and reinforce consistently high-performing ones. ■ Convert underused space into adaptable meeting or training rooms as needs evolve. ■ Maintain low-stimulus access points and flexible layouts to accommodate diverse user needs. 			

Action

Pilot, refinement and ebedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use short-cycle micro-pilots to test new ideas rapidly before committing team capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Trial small-scale interventions (e.g. a new workshop format or employer engagement method) over 1–2 weeks to understand impact quickly. ■ Involve frontline staff in evaluating what worked, what didn't and what should be stopped, scaled or redesigned. 			

Action

Pilot, refinement and ebedding	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Formalise a 'sunset review' process so pilots don't become permanent by accident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Set an automatic review point (e.g. after 4–6 weeks) for every new activity, deciding whether to extend, adapt or close it. ■ Use simple criteria – engagement, outcomes, operational burden – to ensure only high value practices are embedded. 			

Action

Outcomes, impact and learning	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Track ‘stickiness’ indicators that predict retention and employer confidence, not just starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Measure employer return rates, interview to offer conversions and onboarding completion. ■ Track 13- and 26-week sustainment and cost per hire to demonstrate long term value. ■ Use these insights to inform continuous improvement and investment cases. 			

Action

Outcomes, impact and learning	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Introduce participant journey mapping to understand where people progress smoothly and where they stall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Map touchpoints from first contact to sustained employment to identify friction points (e.g. application stages, travel barriers, digital steps). ■ Use this insight to adjust processes, add supports or redesign steps that repeatedly cause drop off. 			

Action

Further support

- [Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set \(ASC-WDS\)/Workforce Intelligence reports](#) – Use workforce data to evidence the case for change, benchmark your performance with others (e.g., how retention rates compare) and identify issues, opportunities and risks.
- [Recruitment support](#) – This comprehensive suite of recruitment support provides tools, resources, and best-practice guidance to help social care organisations effectively attract, assess and retain staff who demonstrate the right values and behaviours for high quality care.
- [Induction](#) – Skills for Care provides a comprehensive induction toolkit for social care employers, offering structured checklists, role-specific guidance and inclusive best-practice resources to support effective new-starter onboarding.
- [The Care Workforce Pathway](#) – Develop your workforce with clear roles and career progression.