



News Release

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Over 3,000 people supported by North East social housing providers towards employment, training and opportunity

Housing providers across the North East region have helped thousands of social housing residents and those in their communities into employment and training over the last two years, through the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).

Working in partnership, Housing Employment Network North East (HENNE), the North East and Tees Valley Housing Partnership members have together helped over 3,000 people move closer to work through UKSPF funded employability programmes, with over 1,000 people are now successfully in work as a result.

In a region that experiences high levels of economic inactivity and has the lowest employment rate of any English region, these results underline the importance of collaborative, locally delivered approaches that help people overcome barriers and access sustainable employment.

Jenny Allinson, Chair of HENNE and Executive Director of Communities at Bernicia, said: "The success of these programmes demonstrates the power of housing providers working together to support local people and communities. We would like to thank our funders and partners whose commitment and investment have made this possible.

"Housing organisations are uniquely placed to reach people who may be furthest from the labour market, building trusted relationships and providing support at a pace that works for them. Through

HENNE, partners have combined their expertise, local knowledge and wider support services to deliver tailored solutions that help people overcome barriers, gain new skills and access sustainable employment opportunities."

During 2024 to 2026, HENNE successfully secured over £6.5 million of UKSPF funding. This has enabled HENNE partners, which include both social housing providers and stock holding local authority members from the North East Housing Partnership and Tees Valley Housing Partnership, to implement BOOST and the New Start and Green Start programmes.

The BOOST programme supports those facing multiple barriers to employment. It provides person-centred support tailored to individual needs and aspirations, enabling people to progress at their own pace towards outcomes such as improved confidence, skills development, training and employment. In the last two years, the BOOST programme has supported 2,670 people towards employment and 872 of them are now in paid work.

Meanwhile, the New Start and Green Start programmes help people aged 18+ improve their career prospects through paid five-month long work placements with local employers. With no prior experience necessary and ongoing support from an employment advisor, the programme enables individuals to explore roles within a wide range of industries, including the green energy sector, engineering, hospitality and construction.

In the last two years, 197 people have undertaken work placements through the New Start and Green Start programmes and 75% of them have either stayed with their employer or gone on to secure other work.

The £6.5 million UKSPF funding split across the region. £3.5 million supported employability programmes in the Tees Valley (branded as Move Forward Tees Valley and commissioned by Tees Valley Combined Authority), £2.8million in Newcastle, Northumberland, North and South Tyneside, commissioned by the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority and and £220,000 in County Durham, commissioned by Durham County Council.

Lynsey Sweeney, Managing Director of Communities that Work, the national body in England focused on social housing and employment, said: "The collective impact HENNE has had via this funding is a great example of how collaboration can help overcome barriers to employment and

create lasting opportunities for social housing residents: closely aligning their work with the Government's ambition to Get Britain Working by connecting people with the skills, confidence and support they need to access good jobs.

"As the national conversation continues to focus on Andy Burnham's ambitious devolution agenda, partnerships like this demonstrate the value of locally led approaches that respond to the needs of communities and employers alike."

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