



Connect to Work

Top Tips

July 2025

Background

Economic inactivity has risen up the national agenda in recent years. In the UK, 1.9 million people who would like to work but are not participating in the labour market – often due to health issues or disability.

Successive governments have looked to put in place provision to help more people into work. Connect to Work (CtW) is the largest of such programmes. At its peak, it is expected to support around 100,000 people a year.

While it is the largest, there are a range of other interventions, so it is vital it complements other provision including WorkWell, Individual Placement and Support programmes for people with severe mental illness and for drug and alcohol dependency, as well as other locally led programmes.

LGA reports evidenced local government's vital role in addressing economic activity, and we also published data on the factors driving economic inactivity across different areas in England.

More about Connect to Work

What support will participants receive?

CtW will provide out of work participants with intensive employment support for up to 12 months, or support for up to 4 months participants who are at risk of falling out of employment or self-employment due to disability, health conditions and complex barriers to work.

Who will deliver it?

CtW will be delivered by 43 clusters of local authorities across England – devolved authorities where they exist, and to (clusters of) councils elsewhere. A lead local authority (Accountable Body) for each cluster will work with its constituent local authorities to design CtW locally and make decisions on how to deliver it – in house, procured or a mix of both. Each area must negotiate a Delivery Plan with DWP. It will also be delivered across four clusters in Wales.

The Greater Manchester and West Midlands Combined Authorities received their share of CtW funding through the new Integrated Settlement mechanism to deliver separate Supported Employment provision in their areas. More Delivery Areas will be eligible to receive an Integrated Settlement from 2026-27 – this will be the North East, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, and Liverpool City Region.

When will it go live?

There will be a phased rollout across England (and Wales) during 2025. The Accountable Body for each cluster will decide when to launch CtW in their area. It will run to the end of this Parliament. The first area – covering the West London Alliance delivery area – opened for referrals at the end of April.

What is Supported Employment?

CtW is a Supported Employment 'place, train and maintain' programme. This means it will bring together vocational profiling, employer engagement, job finding, and on

and off the job support for participants. Employers will also be supported to take on participants. It will also provide tailored self-employment support where appropriate. Supported Employment uses the Individual Placement and Support or Supported Employment Quality Framework fidelity models. Read more about these on the [IPS Grow](#) and [BASE website](#) accordingly. The DWP guidance provides links to more detailed documents.

Funding

The Autumn Budget 2024 announced £115 million funding in total for 2025/26 for the programme (including the Integrated Settlement funding). Funding for the rest of the programme will be confirmed at the Spending Review.

Development of the top tips

In January 2025, L&W reviewed a range of evidence and evaluations of Supported Employment programmes in the UK to identify key themes critical to developing Supported Employment programmes. It consulted on the findings with representatives from councils and mayoral authorities across England during a roundtable held in February 2025 which informed the development of the top tips.

The top tips include a range of best practice examples to support aspects of the CtW programme considered effective by the sector or have been thoroughly tested. It is worth noting that not all the example programmes included are Supported Employment programmes, but the elements of the programmes highlighted are compatible with this model.

The top tips are meant to be indicative rather than prescriptive. A list of questions has been included at the end of each top tips document to guide your reflections and considerations.