

National Employment Service

WORK · SKILLS · PAID COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

A joined-up service that helps people into work and retraining - and pays for valuable work the market will not fund. Voluntary, at a real wage, never workfare. Honest about the cost, and tested before it is built at scale.

The problem

- 9.3m working-age people economically inactive (2.8m long-term sick); ~1.5m unemployed; ~900k young people not in work or training
- Yet shortages persist in care, construction and the trades
- Valuable community work goes undone for want of anyone to pay for it
- Support is fragmented, and people navigate it alone

What the National Employment Service (NES) adds

- One route through the system for the person
- Paid, additional, socially-valuable work the market won't fund
- A fix so work always pays (the Universal Credit taper)
- A consent-based view of skills - no national database
- It uses Skills England, the colleges, the Mayors and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP); it does not duplicate them

TWO MISSIONS

1 · Better Work and Skills

Integrated support into work and retraining, using the existing apprenticeship and skills system. Sector-agnostic - care, construction, digital, the creative industries, any path. Cheap and cost-effective.

2 · Paid Community Contribution

Paid, additional, real work the market won't fund - community, care, environment, culture and heritage - for people and places the market has left behind. Progression by default; a permanent floor where no jobs exist.

THE HONEST NUMBERS

~£26k cost of a paid placement, per year	~£4bn/yr real Exchequer cost at 300,000 placements	~0.97 societal benefit-cost ratio - roughly break-even	NOT self-funding - and we never claim it is
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The question for you: how much should the country pay for valuable work in communities the market has left behind - and is it worth a real, ongoing cost to the public purse? That is a judgement for the public, not for the spreadsheet.

The ask: prove it first

A serious pilot - ~12,000 paid placements across 4-5 regions, ~£1-1.8bn over three years - that measures the uncertain benefits rather than assuming them, and builds national infrastructure useful even if NES never scales. National scale is earned by evidence, not assumed.

How it stays non-partisan

- Voluntary; no compulsion, no sanctions
- No tax prescribed - a neutral core plus an optional menu
- Additionality enforced; no displacement of real jobs
- Presents options; does not advocate adoption