



PRESS RELEASE

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Young trainees land dream jobs thanks to charitable trust

An educational charity, which took on young trainees to set them on the path for employment in land-based roles, is celebrating after five of them were offered jobs.

The Ernest Cook Trust took on nine recruits through the Government's Kickstart Scheme to work with partners in Cumbria.

The recruits were employed on different projects, including Lowther Estate, Susan's Farm at Carlisle and The Oaklea Trust, Kendal. The Ernest Cook Trust and one of its partner organisations, Right2Work, also delivered a six-week employability programme for the trainees.

Now six have gone into employment, with five of the six landing jobs in land-based roles. "By taking on our Kickstart recruits, we gave nine young people an opportunity to learn skills for environmental and land management roles, which we hoped would lead them on to greater career opportunities," said Emily Crawley, Head of Learning at The Ernest Cook Trust.

"It's wonderful to see them developing new skills and we are especially proud that five have now gone into fulltime roles, with the others having lots to show potential employers on their CVs."

The Ernest Cook Trust is a UK-wide educational charity, which creates outdoor learning experiences for children, young people and their families, on its own estates and with partner estates across the country. It also offers grants to support outdoor learning activities.

The Kickstart trainees now in employment include Lucas Chappelhow, 24, from Penrith, who has joined contract farming company Evolution Farming; Alex Jerome, 19, from Appleby, who is working with Lowther Castle & Gardens facilities team; and James Blenkarn, 18, from Penrith, who joined the Lowther estates team.

Of the Kickstart scheme, James said: "It helped me move on in life, made me realise what jobs I am capable of and has helped me understand health and safety and how important it is in the work place."

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Lucas added: “It’s helped me get back into work and motivated me. I can’t believe how much it has helped me and boosted my confidence and now I’ve got a job.”

During their six months as Kickstart recruits, Lucas, Alex and James worked at Lowther Castle on its ongoing rewilding scheme, learning valuable skills in farming, land management and the environment.

Kickstart trainee, Ben Fleming, worked with The Oaklea Trust as a ‘green champion’ to find ways in which the organisation could work more environmentally – for example, looking at improved recycling and low energy lightbulbs. He has now been given a three-month contract to remain with the Trust, with a view to this being extended for 12 months.

Minister for Employment, Mims Davies MP said: “It’s great to see success stories like these at The Ernest Cook Trust, because they show exactly how the Kickstart scheme is helping to transform the lives of these young people, and more than 100,000 others across the country.”

Department for Work and Pensions Senior Partnership Manager Elaine Herbert added: “The Ernest Cook Trust have provided life changing opportunities for young people through the Department for Work and Pensions Kickstart Scheme. In a hugely challenging time for many young people, they have created new job opportunities, boosting skills, and supporting young people to move into good work that develops essential life skills. Exemplar employers such as The Ernest Cook Trust working with Jobcentre teams have brought the Plan for Jobs to life”.

Emily added: “We hope to build on what we are doing in Cumbria, and to take on more trainees at some of our other locations in the UK.”

Earlier this year, The Ernest Cook Trust purchased Low Beckside Farm, part of the now closed Newton Rigg agricultural college, to retain it as a centre for land-based learning. The Trust also works with Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership. For more information about The Ernest Cook Trust, visit <https://ernestcooktrust.org.uk/>.

Additional information about our Outdoor Futures programme:

<https://ernestcooktrust.org.uk/learning-from-the-land/outdoor-futures/>

Notes to Editors:

For more information contact press officer Jo Smyth jo@wordworker.co.uk 07780 639287. Visit The Ernest Cook Trust website at <https://ernestcooktrust.org.uk/>

The Ernest Cook Trust, headquartered in Gloucestershire, is a UK educational charity that creates outdoor learning experiences for children, young people and their families, particularly those who are disadvantaged. The Trust nurtures a lifelong journey of learning, appreciation and respect for the countryside through the experiences and support it offers for young people and their communities.

Established in 1952, the Trust remains deeply rooted in its founder’s love of the countryside and owns more than 22,500 acres of land across the UK.

The Ernest Cook Trust carries out its educational work on and beyond its estates, through grant funding activities and through the partnerships and collaborations with like-minded organisations who share a passion for outdoor learning.