

# Careers in Occupational Therapy in Adult Social Care Work - Live - Thrive



# Occupational Therapy in Adult Social Care – Westmorland and Furness Council

## Who are we?

Westmorland and Furness Council was officially formed in April 2023 with a clear ambition: to support people to thrive. We are committed to helping people live in a place they call home, surrounded by the people they love, in communities where we look out for one another and do the things that matter most to them.

We recognise that our staff are the true change-makers. To make a meaningful impact for the people and carers we work with, we need the best people in our teams. That's why we prioritise ensuring all our workers have the guidance, support, challenge, culture, environment, and tools they need to do their work well.

At Westmorland and Furness, we are committed to providing a robust support package to guide you through all stages of your social work career. We aim to help you develop your confidence, skills, and expertise at a pace that is right for you.

We look forward to welcoming you to our team.

*“Joining Westmorland and Furness Council has given me the chance to continue my passion for Occupational Therapy, building on my operational and strategic experience in my role as Principal Occupational Therapist.*

*I am excited to help bring the council vision and ambitions for Adult Social Care to life. I want to be a strong advocate for our service, making sure Occupational Therapists across our teams feel recognised, valued, and supported. We are committed to continuous professional development offering supervision, training and leadership opportunities.*

*Working as an Occupational Therapist within the council means focusing on what matters most - supporting the priorities of the people in our communities. We are looking for passionate, skilled individuals who want to make a difference and can help us drive our service forward.*

*We offer a range of career development pathways, including Occupational Therapy apprenticeships and a structured assessed year in practice for newly qualified therapists. Our commitment to learning and professional growth ensures you are supported at every stage of your journey.*

*For anyone considering their future in Occupational Therapy, I cannot recommend it enough. It is an incredibly rewarding profession where you have the privilege of working alongside people to help them achieve what's meaningful to them, overcome challenges, and realise their goals. It is about making a real difference in people's lives—every single day. If you are passionate about making a difference through Occupational Therapy, we'd love to hear from you. Join us and be part of a supportive, forward thinking team.”*

**Katie Grant, Occupational Therapy Service Manager  
(Principal OT)**



## Working with Adults in Westmorland and Furness Adult Social Care

Our teams work with people with a wide range of support needs across their adult life, including transition from Children's Services to Adult Social Care.

Values in Practice is Westmorland and Furness Council's practice framework for social work with adults. It describes our approach to social care, reflecting the values, culture and behaviours of the council.

Our aim is to empower and enable adults to have a good quality of life, valuing their unique qualities, strengths and rights.

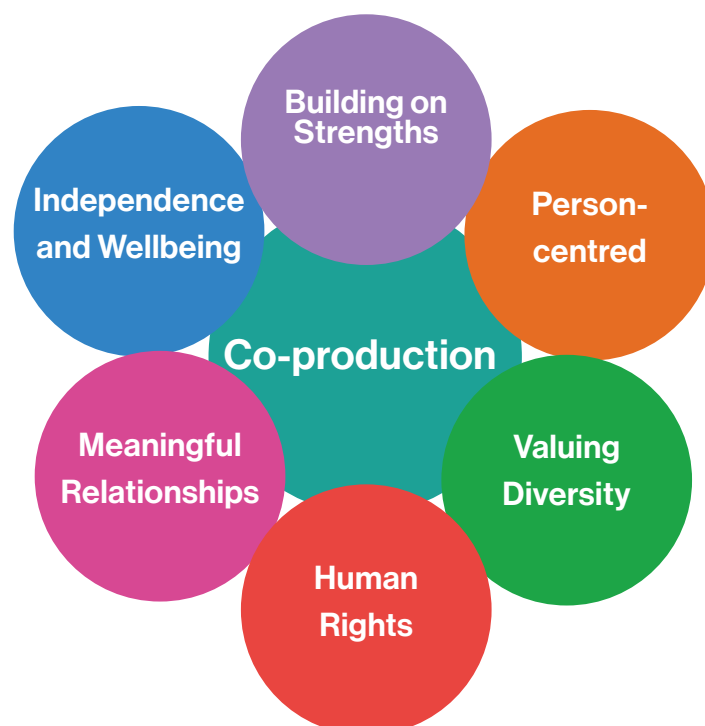
We recognise and actively promote meaningful relationships, social connections, a place in our communities and reciprocity.

Values in Practice recognises that social work is not just a values-based, but also a skills-based profession. Social work support is a valuable intervention in itself that supports people to achieve their desired outcomes and a good quality of life.

## Values in Practice

### Our Aims:

- We want all adults in Westmorland and Furness to feel valued and involved throughout Adult Social Care's work with them.
- Our aim is for everyone to be able to access the right support when they need it, in the way and in the place that works best for them.
- Our practice is underpinned by values, leading to an improved quality of life, independence and wellbeing for people.
- All adults have the right to citizenship in their lives and communities. We will work with people to empower and maximise their capabilities, seeking to create opportunities and connections in sustainable and meaningful ways.



# Careers and Development

We are passionate about supporting Occupational Therapists to grow their careers while making a real difference in people's lives. Our career development framework is tailored to your skills and experience, ensuring you have the right opportunities to progress.

As an Occupational Therapist, you'll empower individuals through personalised interventions that promote independence and wellbeing. This includes expertise in:

- Moving and handling
- Enablement techniques
- Specialist equipment
- Major and minor adaptations
- Assistive technology

All of this is underpinned by holistic assessments, ensuring care is proportionate, person-centred, and responsive to individual needs.

## OT Apprenticeship Programme

Our apprenticeship pathway offers a practical and academic route into the profession, nurturing new talent and opening doors for those who want to build a rewarding career in Occupational Therapy.

## Support for Newly Qualified OTs

For those stepping straight out of university, we provide structured support through the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) programme. This ensures you feel confident and supported during your first year of practice, with guidance from experienced mentors.

## Specialist Training Opportunities

We invest in continuous professional development, offering training in:

- Strength-based practice
- Moving and handling techniques
- Specialist equipment
- Proportionate care approaches

## Career Progression Framework for Occupational Therapists

Occupational Therapist career grading within Adult Social Care at Westmorland and Furness Council is aligned with the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) Career Development Framework. This Framework supports the professional growth of the occupational therapy workforce and ensures that services continue to meet the needs of people, their families, and carers.

## Pillars of Practice



The Framework provides a clear, inclusive, and practical structure that applies across all settings, sectors, and career levels. It is built around four Pillars of Practice:

- Professional Practice
- Facilitation of Learning
- Leadership
- Evidence, Research and Development

Each Pillar includes nine Career Levels, illustrating the breadth and depth of opportunities available within the Occupational Therapy profession—from those new to Occupational Therapy to those in advanced or strategic roles.

Through these programmes, you'll gain the skills and confidence to deliver high-quality, person-centred care while advancing your career. Whether you're just starting out or looking to take the next step, we'll support you every step of the way.



# Why work in Westmorland and Furness?

## Beautiful Countryside

Discover spectacular landscapes, picturesque villages, a warm welcome and a rich cultural heritage. Explore the fells, splash about on the lakes, take a wild adventure or simply enjoy the peace. Breathe in and be inspired.

## A place to raise your family

86% of our primary and secondary schools are good or outstanding. In 2022 Kirkby Lonsdale was voted one of the best places to live by The Times, only to be toppled by Penrith in 2023, two beautiful towns in the heart of Westmorland and Furness. With crime rates significantly lower than the national average in England, and affordable housing on the rise, it's a great place to raise your family.



*"I began my career as an Occupational Therapist in the NHS, and it was during my time with the Discharge to Assess Team that I discovered how much I loved working out in the community, so I decided to look for a job in my local community, that could offer the flexibility I needed with a young family. Joining Westmorland and Furness Council has been able to offer me exactly what I was looking for and I really appreciate the flexibility the role offers, which enables me to work full time.*

*I have found my role within the council is very varied, and I really enjoy both short-term and long-term work, having built up great relationships with customers who are on and off my caseload as their needs change. We have a really strong positive group of Occupational Therapists across all the teams within Adult Social Care and Health, and we work closely together to ensure the customer is being assessed and supported by the most appropriate service.*

*Westmorland and Furness Council has offered excellent training opportunities, supporting my professional development in line with my interests and aspirations."*

**Debra, Occupational Therapist, South Lakes**





## Going Places

An important junction on the West Coast Main Line, trains from Oxenholme Lake District frequently run to London, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, providing connections with the Windermere Branch. London-bound trains run every two hours, direct or via Birmingham, while trains to Scotland run every hour. Alternatively, there are 20 direct trains from Barrow-in-Furness to Manchester Airport each day.

**By car:** Kendal to Manchester in 1hr 20m, Penrith to Newcastle in 1hr 30m, Barrow in Furness to Lancaster in 1hr

# Benefits of Working for Westmorland and Furness Council

Westmorland and Furness is one of the most beautiful regions in the UK, with stunning landscapes, diverse communities, and a great quality of life. At the heart of delivering services to these communities are our employees.

We are proud of our staff, value their contribution, and are committed to supporting, empowering and developing colleagues so that Westmorland and Furness remains a place where people can live, work and thrive.

We are a caring council, dedicated to your wellbeing, work–life balance, and professional growth.

## Work–Life Balance and Flexibility

We recognise the importance of flexibility in helping you balance your personal and professional life.

- Flexible working – family-friendly patterns, flexible start and finish times, and home-working supported by modern technology
- Time off in lieu (TOIL) – with genuine encouragement to take it back
- Annual leave – 25 days per year, rising to 31 after five years, plus bank holidays
- Additional leave purchase scheme – buy extra annual leave, subject to conditions

## Pay, Pensions and Security

We offer a competitive package to give you peace of mind now and in the future.

- Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) – with employer contributions worth, on average, twice as much as your own
- Life assurance – from day one of LGPS membership, paying a lump sum of three times your annual salary
- Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) – a cost-efficient way to build your retirement fund, supported by expert guidance through My Money Matters
- Financial wellbeing support – including webinars, one-to-one coaching, retirement planning tools and more
- Payroll giving – donate to any UK charity directly from your salary, with tax savings
- Free will-writing service – provided for staff and their partners by professional specialists

## Travel and Sustainability

We are committed to reducing our environmental impact and supporting sustainable travel.

- Free workplace parking – in council-owned car parks (Mon–Fri)
- Sustainable travel options – including pool cars, car sharing and public transport support
- Cycle to Work scheme – tax-efficient access to bikes and safety equipment
- Carbon commitment – we aim to be a carbon net zero council as soon as possible, and to help our area achieve carbon net zero by 2037

## Family-Friendly Policies

We understand that family life is important and provide a wide range of support.

- Maternity, adoption, paternity and parental leave
- Maternity support leave
- Foster care leave
- Neonatal care leave
- Life events leave (e.g. bereavement, fertility treatment, carers)
- Flexible retirement and career break scheme

## Professional Support and Development

We invest in your career and ensure you have the right support.

- Stable management team – with open and regular access to senior leaders
- Support for social workers – including payment of Social Work England registration fees and career grade progression
- Ongoing development – mentoring, training opportunities and career pathways to help you grow and progress

## Additional Benefits

We also offer a wide range of practical benefits:

- Childcare vouchers
- Car loans and lease schemes
- Free eye tests
- Discounts and wellbeing offers
- A relocation may be available for eligible roles, if you would like to find out more about what we can offer and check the eligibility criteria please contact our Recruitment Team on [resourcing@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk](mailto:resourcing@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk)

For more details on these please visit our benefits site here: [Our benefits | Careers](#)



*"I started my career as an Occupational Therapy Assistant, where I was given the opportunity for a secondment that allowed me to work and study while completing a university placement to achieve my Occupational Therapy Degree.*

*What I love most about being an Occupational Therapist is the chance to work closely with people in my local community, seeing the difference our support really makes to a person's life. Being an Occupational Therapist is such a rewarding mix of medical knowledge and compassionate care. In my role, I also get to mentor student OTs and Social Care Workers, which allows me to help them grow and develop their skills. What makes it even better is the team I'm part of! We are a really close-knit team, always looking out for each other, and the support from our manager makes a huge difference."*

**Angela, Occupational Therapist**

## Come and join us

All our services share the same basic principle: we strive to make a positive difference to the people and communities we support. We are passionate about the people we work with, and the people who work with us are at the heart of everything we do.

When people join Westmorland and Furness Adult Social Care, they tend to stay. That's because we are proud to offer supportive teams, excellent benefits, and clear opportunities for career progression. Our staff tell us that they feel valued, supported, and part of something bigger — making a real difference to the lives of people in our communities.

From the moment you arrive, you will be welcomed into a team that wants you to succeed. We invest in your professional development, offering mentoring, training, and pathways for progression so you can grow with us. Our benefits package supports your health, wellbeing, and work–life balance, with flexible working, generous annual leave, and pension options that give you peace of mind for the future.

We are committed to ensuring regular supervision, support, and accessible managers who are there to guide and support you. You will also have access to a strong network of colleagues across the service, creating an environment where learning is shared, and achievements are celebrated.

**In short, we don't just offer a job — we offer a career and a community. We hope you'll choose to join us and see why so many of our staff build their future here in Westmorland and Furness.**

If you would like to know more about working in Occupational Therapy within Westmorland and Furness Council, please reach out to Katie Grant, Occupational Therapy Service Manager (Principal OT) at Westmorland and Furness Council, at [katie.grant@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk](mailto:katie.grant@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk)

## Join Our Journey

Take the next step in your career and explore our current vacancies today, scan the QR code or visit:

<https://careers.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/home-careers>



## Employee Spotlights:

### Jodie – Occupational Therapist

#### My Journey to Becoming an Occupational Therapist

“I began my career working as a community carer, support worker, rehabilitation assistant, and occupational therapy assessment officer. Each of these roles gave me valuable experience of supporting people in different ways. Eventually, I was able to complete my Occupational Therapy degree through the Apprenticeship scheme with my previous employer, which allowed me to study while continuing to work. I qualified just over a year ago, and I’m proud of the journey that brought me here.”



#### Why I Chose Adult Social Care at Westmorland and Furness Council

“Community work has always been my passion—I love the opportunity to meet people in their own homes and support them where it matters most. I was drawn to the council because of the opportunities for further training and development, as well as the benefits of flexible working hours, annual leave, pension, and hybrid working. It felt like the right place to grow both personally and professionally.”

#### Training and Career Development

“I completed my BSc Occupational Therapy degree via the Apprenticeship route, which gave me the chance to learn while working. The support I received along the way was invaluable, and it’s helped me build the skills I use every day in practice. Westmorland and Furness Council offer a fantastic ASYE Programme, that offered support, training and development in my first year of practice, I have enjoyed the ASYE. I have felt supported. It has guided my learning and given me structured opportunities and support to build my skills.”

#### What I Enjoy Most About My Role

“Meeting clients in the local community is the most rewarding part of my job. I get to listen to what is important to them and use my skills, knowledge, and training to promote independence and help them live the lives they want to live. I feel privileged to be welcomed into people’s homes, to build professional relationships, and to make a positive difference by focusing on what is meaningful to them.”

#### Advice for Future Occupational Therapists

“If you’re thinking about a career in Adult Social Care, make contact and find out more. Look into the Apprenticeship scheme—it’s a fantastic way to qualify while gaining hands-on experience. Starting out as an OT Assistant or Social Care Worker can also be a great first step.”

## Case Studies - Video

Watch our case study video here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovacNtNLFJQ&list=PL2pTXTGmBZkpibJ5VB7bGclGSDCo0WBc\\_](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovacNtNLFJQ&list=PL2pTXTGmBZkpibJ5VB7bGclGSDCo0WBc_)



## Claire Jackson – Occupational Therapy Team Manager, South Lakes Adult Social Care



### My Journey to Becoming an Occupational Therapist

“I began my career in 2000 as an Occupational Therapy Assistant within Adult Social Care, a role that is now known as Social Care Worker. I spent two years in this position and enjoyed it so much that I decided to go back to college to complete my Occupational Therapy course. After qualifying, I returned to Adult Social Care as a fully-fledged OT. Over the years, I gained valuable experience and gradually worked my way up the career ladder, becoming Team Manager in 2020.”

### Why I Chose Adult Social Care at Westmorland and Furness Council

“I always knew I wanted to work in the community, supporting people where they most want to be. It is a privilege to visit people in their own homes and to support them on their Occupational Therapy journey. That sense of being able to make a difference in the place that matters most to them is what attracted me to this role and continues to inspire me today.”

### Training and Career Development

“I completed the two-year Graduate Diploma Course, which at the time was unpaid, as unfortunately the council did not yet offer an apprenticeship scheme. Starting out as an OT Assistant gave me invaluable experience before training, and I believe it set me up for success in my career. Today, I’m delighted that apprenticeships are available, offering new opportunities for people to qualify while gaining hands-on experience.”

### What I Enjoy Most About My Role

“Even now, as a Team Manager, what I enjoy most is knowing that I can still make a difference, sometimes even a small one, that helps improve the independence and quality of life of the people we support. That’s what makes this work so meaningful.”

### Advice for Future Occupational Therapists

“If you’re considering a career in Adult Social Care, I’d recommend starting as a Social Care Worker to gain experience in Occupational Therapy before training. The apprenticeship scheme is a wonderful opportunity to complete your OT training while working, and it’s a great way to begin a rewarding career journey.”







## Translation Services

If you require this document in another format (e.g. CD, Braille or large type) or in another language, please telephone: **0300 373 3300**.

للوصول إلى هذه المعلومات بلغتك، يرجى الاتصال 0300 373 3300

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 0300 373 3300 নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।

如果您希望通过母语了解此信息，请致电 0300 373 3300

Jeigu norétuméte gauti šią informaciją savo kalba, skambinkite telefonu 0300 373 3300

W celu uzyskania informacji w Państwa języku proszę zatelefonować pod numer 0300 373 3300

Se quiser aceder a esta informação na sua língua, telefone para o 0300 373 3300

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde görmek istiyorsanız lütfen 0300 373 3300 numaralı telefonu arayınız

