

Investing in the future

Businesses who are looking to future-proof themselves by expanding their workforce's skillsets are being urged to find out more about new funding support that could help them.

Warwickshire County Council's Warwickshire Skills Hub has launched the Future Skills Fund – which is a multi-faceted support programme aimed at encouraging the recruitment of apprentices, as well as upskilling existing staff.

While the fund is targeted at a variety of business sectors, it could assist tourism and hospitality businesses seeking to improve their sustainability efforts and other similar goals.

One of the programmes behind the Future Skills Fund is the Salary Support Programme, which could potentially help a business with £2,000 of salary support for an apprentice whose purpose is to improve the company's sustainability aims.

The Future Focus Apprenticeships Programme is for SMEs who are taking on or upskilling existing employees aged 50 or over, and wish to have the cost covered for their 5 per cent contribution to apprenticeship training. Businesses can also apply for up to a maximum of £750 from the Additional Training Fund. This is for training that is identified outside of the apprenticeship standard.

The New Direction 50+ Skills Investment Fund, meanwhile, provides SMEs with a grant of up to £1,000 for a college or training provider to deliver training to help over-50s gain new knowledge and skills that will meet the future needs of the company.

Vicki Haslam, Senior Business Skills Advisor at Warwickshire County Council, commented: "With various partners coming together to improve south Warwickshire's green tourism credentials over the coming months and years, there has never been a better time for business owners to explore how the Future Skills Fund could help them in this area.

"This could be using funding to equip an existing staff member to learn more about practical sustainable practices, or recruiting an apprentice to focus on sustainability full-time, to help implement long-term and tangible differences."

Interested businesses can find out more by emailing skillshub@warwickshire.gov.uk or visiting skillshub.warwickshire.gov.uk/