



Building brighter futures with Northern Rights

Northern Rights is a social enterprise based in the North East of England that has helped people across the Tyne and Wear districts into meaningful employment.

It supports people facing barriers to work – including health challenges, long-term unemployment, or limited work experience – to find sustainable employment opportunities to their individual needs. It is one of the many local partnerships our colleagues across our specialist businesses rely on to help people within the communities we work in access sustainable and meaningful employment.

Our partnership with Northern Rights began in 2017, when our cleaning colleagues in the North East first turned to them to help fill vacancies within our transport cleaning contracts. What started as a small, local initiative has grown into a partnership built on trust, empathy and shared success. Over the years, it has expanded across our specialist businesses, with more teams now turning to Northern Rights to help fill their roles. To date, more than sixty people have been recruited through this partnership.

Through years of close collaboration, Northern Rights has come to know our specialist businesses, culture and ethos. They understand our working environments and the type of candidates who will thrive within them. They handpick individuals with the right work ethic, willingness to learn and a belief that, with the right support, they can succeed. Our teams then provide the training and ongoing support needed to help every new colleague settle into their role and achieve long-term success.





How we work together

When a vacancy arises, our teams reach out to Northern Rights. Drawing on their understanding of our roles and working environments, Northern Rights shortlist candidates they believe are a strong match. Their team manages the interview scheduling process in a way that supports both candidates and our recruiting managers. They also remove practical barriers by covering travel costs so candidates can attend with confidence. Every applicant receives constructive feedback, ensuring that even those who are not successful still gain something valuable from the experience.

For successful candidates, support continues well beyond the job offer. Northern Rights stay in close contact during a

new colleague's first six months – a period that is often the most daunting, especially for people who may never have worked before. During this time, they provide encouragement, guidance and a trusted point of contact as each person adjusts to their new role.

Alongside this, our teams provide the training, equipment and day-to-day support needed for each role. Many Northern Rights candidates join us having never worked before or after a long period away from employment, so we focus on creating a safe, steady and encouraging introduction to work. New starters are buddied with experienced colleagues who guide them through tasks until they feel comfortable in their routines.

Our supervisors and managers play an active role throughout this transition – many are trained mental health first aiders, ensuring any colleague facing uncertainty, anxiety or early challenges has someone to turn to for reassurance and practical support. We also remove additional financial pressures by providing colleagues with PPE and a free travel card to help them get to and from work.

Throughout these early months, we remain in close contact with Northern Rights to ensure each colleague receives the right balance of community support and workplace coaching. Together, we help people not only learn the skills they need for the job, but also build the confidence and belief that they can thrive long term.



Shaun Farrington – Onboard Train Cleaning Operative, Churchill

Shaun joined our cleaning business after a long and difficult period in his life. For fifteen years, Shaun was the primary carer for his father, a role he fulfilled with complete dedication and compassion. After his father passed away, Shaun found himself grieving and unsure how to rebuild his life, having been out of the workplace for such a long time.

When Shaun approached Northern Rights, he received support with wellbeing, CV

development and job matching. His employment adviser recognised his qualities and introduced him to our transport cleaning team. After impressing at interview, Shaun began on a secondment before progressing to a fixed-term contract and then a permanent role.

Today, Shaun is a valued and well-known member of our transport cleaning team, appreciated by colleagues, our client and passengers alike.

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Shaun said:

Northern Rights and Churchill helped me start again. I didn't know if I would ever get back into work, but they believed in me. Now I feel part of something and I'm proud of what I do.

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Jack Taylor – Day Shift Patrol Charge Hand, Churchill

After struggling to find work, Jack was referred to Northern Rights through the Jobcentre. He was introduced to an opportunity within our transport cleaning team and was immediately drawn to the idea of working outdoors, engaging with the

public and stepping into a new environment.

Jack adapted quickly to his role and is now responsible for leading his team, managing static sites and coordinating call-outs across the network.

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Jack said:

I liked the idea of working outside and doing something different. The support I've had has helped me build confidence really quickly. The job has made a big difference and has helped me support my growing family and build a more stable future.

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Ryan Greener – Day Shift Static Operative, Churchill

Before joining us, Ryan and his family were struggling. Living on universal credit and unable to secure work, Ryan turned to Northern Rights for support. Within one appointment, he had been offered an interview with our transport cleaning team, which

led to a permanent position at one of our client's stations.

Ryan now maintains a safe and clean environment for passengers and is proud of the routine and responsibility his role brings.

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Ryan said:

Northern Rights and Churchill set me on the right track. Getting this job has changed everything – it's helped me support my son, and I've gained skills I never knew I had.

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Our partnership with Northern Rights continues to grow, driven by a shared commitment to helping people overcome barriers and build brighter futures. Together, we create supportive employment opportunities that help people rebuild their lives for the better.



Deborah Smith, Senior Account Manager at Churchill, said:

We've worked with Northern Rights for many years and have a good success rate with recruitment and retainment of staff through support and encouragement. This in turn has given our colleagues the confidence to thrive in the workplace, which is very rewarding as an employer.

"Northern Rights have not only supported the new recruits but they've also supported us by doing all the groundwork and putting forward suitable candidates for the positions available.

"It's a real pleasure working with Northern Rights - their work and commitment is making a massive difference to people's lives, and we're looking forward to continuing this partnership.

