

# 50+ CHOICES



## What steps are you taking to retain, retrain and recruit older employees?



In 2010, **one in four** of the working age population were **aged 50 and over**; this is projected to increase to **one in three** by 2022.<sup>7</sup>



workers **aged 50 and over** are experienced, reliable, punctual and good at mentoring new workers.<sup>8</sup>

### 50+ CHOICES INITIATIVE

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership is working with the Department for Work and Pensions to support employers to retain, retrain and recruit over 50s and to ensure they are still a valued member of the workforce. This pilot project is in place until 23/04/2021 but the legacy it will leave will continue.

The pilot project works with employers to review their current policies to help them support older employees and to identify where there is need for change. Employers will need to complete an informal one-to-one interview and complete the Employer Interview form and return to [alison.ward@newanglia.co.uk](mailto:alison.ward@newanglia.co.uk)





## BACKGROUND

People in the UK are living longer, and the proportion of older workers is increasing. Employers need to retain valuable skills of older workers, retrain them to upskill and maintain productivity and to benefit from a multi-generational workforce.

A significant number of workers aged 50 and over 'voluntarily' leave the labour market, either because they want to or have planned a financially stable retirement. However, others leave the labour market 'involuntarily', typically due to ill health, caring responsibilities, or redundancy.

Currently the UK employment rate for 55 to 64-year-olds is around 60 per cent and, while this has been increasing for the past 10-15 years, the recent improvement has been relatively modest compared to many other nations. Several countries achieve employment rates of around 70 per cent or above, so we know that there is significant room for improvement.

Life expectancy is increasing and by 2030, the number of people in England aged over 65 will increase by 50 per cent, and the number of people aged 85 and over will double. One in three of the children born today will live to be 100. This is both a huge opportunity and a huge challenge for Government.

In 2011, UK Government removed the default retirement age of 65 and made it

illegal to dismiss an employee due to age. In 2016, automatic pension enrolment was introduced. Yet more needs to be done to bring about change to ensure individuals have an adequate income in retirement, better wellbeing in later life, continue to be more productive at work and increase their economic activity.



**One in four men and one in three women** reaching State Pension age have not worked for five years or more.<sup>2</sup>



**The average age of leaving the labour market has increased over the past two decades, but it is still lower than it was in 1950 and is not keeping pace with the increases in life expectancy.<sup>3</sup>**





Evidence suggests that employers who fail to retain their older workers are losing important skills from their workforce, and the premature loss of older workers can lead to loss of output and higher recruitment costs.

We know that individuals leave for a variety of reasons:

- > Health conditions
- > Disability
- > Caring responsibilities
- > Redundancy
- > Workplace factors
- > Financial security

We know that there are measures which employers can put in place to reduce the number of over 50s leaving the workforce and to ensure they can continue to be a healthy, productive and a valuable member of their organisation.

The Government published its Fuller Working Lives -

### **A Framework for Action**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/587654/fuller-working-lives-a-partnership-approach.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/587654/fuller-working-lives-a-partnership-approach.pdf) to support employers and individuals to access the best support.

## **WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS DO?**

### **Understanding your business**

- > Understanding the age profile of your workforce
- > Consider future projections of staff, resource requirements and demographic changes. Where will your staffing needs exist in the future?

### **Successful retention of over 50s**

- > Understand the reasons older people may leave before they really want to
- > Identify those within your organisation who may be at risk of early departure.
- > Develop a programme of continuous adjustment, in line with the needs of your workforce



### **Health and safety of older workers**

- > Understand the associated costs resulting from an employee's unwilling or involuntary absence from work
- > Take action to look after the health and safety of older workers. Guidance can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website: Health and safety for older workers (hse.gov.uk)

### **Wellbeing at work**

- > Promote healthier lifestyles, both inside and outside of work: NHS Health Check - Home







## Recruitment

- Use age neutral language
- Promote yourself as an age positive employer
- Ensure agency staff are hired in the same manner
- Evaluate candidates according to values, behaviours, competencies demonstrated and their ability to do the job
- Respect differences within the backgrounds and types of qualification which candidates possess. Look for transferable skills

## Learning and development

Ensure that:

- No employee is denied development opportunities because of their age



- Access to and provision of learning and development opportunities for older workers is monitored to ensure equity of access
- Managers and staff of all ages recognise the personal and business benefits of continued development in later life
- Training is delivered in an appropriate context and is responsive to the needs and capabilities of staff
- E-training is delivered in combination with more traditional in-work training opportunities
- Careers advice - job profiles, information and resources | National Careers Service

## Flexible working

Ensure that:

- Managers and staff are aware of the benefits of flexible working arrangements
- Flexible working opportunities are actively promoted to staff members
- There is a clear process and criteria to apply for flexible working
- Requests and agreements for flexible working are monitored to ensure equity of access





## Phased Retirement

- Discuss retirement and future planning throughout an employee's career
- Evaluate how employees can decrease their hours/ days/ responsibilities in a gradual manner as they approach retirement, in a way which supports service delivery
- Consider the relationship between existing flexible working arrangements, and phased retirement options
- Review or develop specific policies for flexible retirement within your organisation [Guide To Pensions - The Pensions Advisory Service](#)

## Develop a strategy for older workers

- Recognise the need to develop an organisational strategy relating specifically to older workers
- Identify how this strategy will be developed, and how it can be implemented successfully throughout the business
- Aim to be proactive, making the most of an ageing workforce and the benefits to be realised

## Knowledge transfer

- Understand the different types of knowledge which must be passed on in your organisation
- Identify which employees possess knowledge which is not duplicated elsewhere
- Focus upon staff that have been with the business for considerable periods of time
- Develop procedures of knowledge transfer, including mentoring programs

### USEFUL LINKS

- [Views on Managing Age Diverse Workforce | Reports | CIPD](#)
- [Acas | Making working life better for everyone in Britain](#)
- [Healthy Workplaces - Age Action Alliance](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/workplace-wellbeing-tool>
- [NHS Health Check - Home](#)
- [New Every Mind Matters campaign - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Public Health England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [50 or over? | Get to know your pension options | Pension Wise](#)
- [Careers advice - job profiles, information and resources | National Careers Service](#)

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