



Ageing Well in Wales: how to improve the employability and skills of people aged 50+?



Older People's Commissioner for Wales
Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru

Employability and Skills Wales Convention, Cardiff, 13 October 2016
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www.olderpeoplewales.com

Ageing Well in Wales: background

- National Partnership Programme, launched Oct 2014. Five priority areas: focus on falls prevention, dementia, loneliness, learning and employment, age-friendly communities
- Strategic partners working on commitments
- Ageing Well Plan for each Local Authority
- Around 1,200 members at network level
- Phase Two Action Plan published Oct 2016, rolling programme of community network events pan-Wales
- Range of information, help & support on AWW website
- ‘Ensuring Wales is a good place to grow older’

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The Ageing Workforce Quiz

- **Q: What percentage of people in Wales are aged over 50?**
- *A: 27% (over 800k from a population of just over 3pm)*
- **Q: What percentage of the working age population will be aged over 50 by 2020?**
- *A: Almost a third*
- **Q: Between 2012 and 2022, it is estimated that 12.5m jobs will be opened up in the UK (through people leaving the workforce and the creation of new jobs). In this time period, how many new younger people will enter the workforce to fill these jobs?**
- *A: 7 million, meaning we require an additional 5.5m workers. Continued economic growth depends on older workers to fill these vacancies*

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The Ageing Workforce Quiz

- **Q: What is the statutory retirement age when you can be made to retire by your employer?**
- *A: There is no state statutory retirement age. If an employer forces an employee to retire, they can face legal action due to discrimination*
- **Q: How many older workers in the UK are estimated to have been forced out of work before state pension age (SPA)?**
- *A: One million*
- **Q: What is the estimated net daily contribution to the Welsh economy made by older people?**
- *A: £3m, which means older people make over a £1bn annual net contribution to the Welsh economy*

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The Ageing Workforce Quiz

- **Q: At what age is it shown that workers' cognitive ability is likely to decrease impacting productivity?**
- *A: Only after the age of 70, and even then not for all workers*
- **Q: Which age group in Wales, if unemployed, are most likely to become long-term unemployed?**
- *A: People aged 50-64. 45% of unemployed people aged 50-64 have been unemployed for over a year, compared to 30% of unemployed 18-24 year olds, and 38% of those aged 25-49*
- **Q: For each person aged 50-64 in Wales classified as a NEET, how many NEETs are there aged 16-24?**
- *A: One quarter: there are an estimated 4 times as many older NEETs as those aged 16-24 (205k NEETs aged 50-64)*

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Employability and skills: barriers for people aged 50+

Ageism / Age Discrimination

A key barrier for many older people who want or need to remain in or re-enter the workplace. There are numerous myths surrounding older workers:

- “Only younger employees are keen to develop their skills or learn new ones”
- “Older workers are set in their ways and are inflexible”
- “Older workers are just waiting to retire, they’re inefficient and unproductive”
- “Older workers do not understand new technologies”
- “Older workers are weak and cannot do manual jobs”
- “Older workers cost more than younger ones”
- **Evidence suggests that teams with a mixture of ages are most productive; that older workers are interested in new skills; that they’re more loyal than younger workers; and that they’re least likely to take time off work due to sickness**

Wales: We cannot afford not to improve the employability and skills of people aged 50+

- Changing demographics and an ageing population. People are working longer through choice and need
- Older people make a massive economic contribution in Wales. Provided with the opportunities, older people can contribute so much more. Asset based approach: how to double their economic contribution and more?
- Time to embrace an ageing workforce, promote age-friendly, age-diverse and multi-generational workplaces
- Utilise the wealth of knowledge, skills and experience that older people have, fill the job vacancies in Wales over the next decade
- Encourage flexible working, develop appropriate skills and training, engage with employees (career reviews, tailored support, pre-retirement planning)

Wales: Moving towards age-friendly workplaces & recognising contribution of older workers

- **Welsh Government:** response to NAFW 2015 Committee Inquiry: commissioned research into barriers facing older workers (CADR); launched 'Age of Investment' campaign; commitment to develop all-age apprenticeships; focus on older people's skills needs in new Employability Skills Programme
- **Ageing Well in Wales:** Opportunities for Learning and Employment (OLE) a priority area. Work with a range of partners to influence change e.g. Welsh Govt, Local Authorities, Wales TUC, BiTC, FSB, Learning & Work Institute, Careers Wales
- **Strategic level:** Promote age-friendly workplaces, apprenticeships, develop digital & financial skills, community & adult-based learning
- **Local Authority level:** range of actions to improve OLE for older people
- **Community level:** Publication of new pocket guide to support and encourage age-friendly businesses

Further information

ONS Five facts about older people at work (1st October)

- The proportion of those aged 65+ who work has almost doubled since records were first collected (1.19m in 2016)
- There were 742k men and 448k women aged 65+ in employment in the UK in May-July 2016
- Part-time self-employed workers tend to be older than part-time employees (22% of all part-time self-employment aged 65+)
- The economy may come to rely more on older workers by 2039 (for every 1k people of working age in 2039, there'll be 370 people SPA)
- The working world for people aged 65+ is similar to those aged 16-64

<http://visual.ons.gov.uk/five-facts-about-older-people-at-work/>

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Further information

BiTC 'Age in the Workplace: Retain, Retrain, Recruit' (2016)

<http://www.ageingwellinwales.com/Libraries/Documents/BITC---Age-in-the-Workplace.pdf>

NAfW Enterprise & Business Committee: Employment Opportunities for People Over 50 Inquiry Report (July 2015)

11 recommendations to Welsh Government:

<http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld10305/cr-ld10305-e.pdf>

UK Govt 'A new vision for older workers: retain, retrain, recruit' (2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-new-vision-for-older-workers-retain-retrain-recruit>

UK Govt 'Employing older workers: An employer's guide to today's multi-generational workforce' (2013)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/142751/employing-older-workers.pdf

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Diolch yn Fawr Thank you

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