

Recruiting from an ageing labour market

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Older workers in numbers

- **1/3 of the workforce, in England, are aged 50 or over (10.7 m)**
- **There are currently 1.4 million people aged 65 or over, in the workforce**
- **There are 950,000 job vacancies in the UK**
- **22% of the population will be aged 65 or over by 2032**

Local Government in numbers

Local Government Workforce (HR)

- Total Workforce: 1,195,898 (2022)
- Workforce Age Demographics:
 - Under 25: **4.7%**,
 - 25-39: **25%**,
 - 40-64: **66.6%**
 - Over 65: **3.5%**

Local Government Landscape



Local Government Workforce (HR) Survey Results (2021 and 2022)

- Nearly all respondents (**94 %**) said that they were experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties
- Nine out of ten (**90 %**) of all respondents said they had a capability skills gap in a least one area
- Councils were undertaking a range of actions to help with recruitment and retention. The most common (actioned by **one in ten**) was to offer flexible working.



Challenges faced by local government

- **Competition from other sectors**
- **Increasing numbers of older workers leaving**
- **Capability skills gaps**
- **The role of local government as a rewarding career, is not widely known**

Why do we need a pledge?

- The UK is facing a skills and labour shortage
- Workers in their 50s and 60s are key to filling these gaps
- Multi-generational workforces drive productivity and innovation
- UK employers are not capitalising on these opportunities



£6.6bn

The skills and labour shortage is costing UK businesses up to £6.6 billion annually



What is the Age-friendly Employer Pledge?



**Multigenerational
workforces drive
productivity and
innovation**



What is the pledge?

The Age-friendly Employer Pledge is a nationwide programme for employers who:

- ✓ **recognise** the importance and value of older workers
- ✓ are **committed** to improving work for people in their 50s and 60s (and beyond)
- ✓ are prepared to **take action** to help them flourish in a multigenerational workforce.

**It's part of a journey
for employers....and is
easy to get started.**

The pledge

As an Age-friendly Employer, we will...

- 1 Identify a **senior sponsor for age-inclusion** in our workforce – and publicly state our commitment to the pledge
- 2 Ensure age is specifically named within our **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies**
- 3 Take one action each year to improve the recruitment, retention and development of workers over 50 from one of the following areas:
 - ✓ Create an age-friendly culture
 - ✓ **Hire age-positively**
 - ✓ Be flexible about flexible working
 - ✓ Encourage career development at all ages
 - ✓ Ensure everyone has the health support they need



We commit to report back on our activities and achievements annually.

Why sign the pledge?

Age-friendly employment benefits all of us.

We all want to know that we will not be marginalised as we age.

Age-inclusion does not compete with other diversity efforts.

Age-friendly policies – like flexible working, open conversations about health, and de-biasing recruitment processes – help everyone.

The Age-friendly Employer Pledge is a small, but tangible, commitment.

Age-friendly employers commit to taking just one action a year towards being more age-friendly – and they can decide what that is.



Positive effects of signing the pledge

- ✓ **Age-positive recruitment** means we draw on a wider pool of applicants for each job.
- ✓ Research shows multigenerational workforces drive **innovation and productivity**.
- ✓ Our older workers can continue to **thrive and contribute**.



**What is Age-friendly
Employment...and how
might you get started?**



How might you start?



Age-friendly five areas where you can take action:

-  Create an age-friendly culture
-  **Hire age-positively**
-  Be flexible about flexible work
-  Career development at all ages
-  Health support for all

Tips for how to get started:

-  **Start a 50+ staff network**
-  **Ask candidates for only their most relevant experience**
-  **Have reason-neutral policies – and communicate them**
-  **Provide a mid-life review**
-  **Line manager training, in access and adjustments**

1. Create an age-friendly culture



CEO makes a statement on staff intranet outlining age-inclusion commitment – sign up to our Age Without Limits Action Day 20th March



Start a 50+ staff network



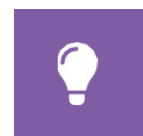
Know your workforce data by age



Don't let ageist comments slide



2. Hire age-positively



Check your job ads



Short diversity statement



Only ask for most relevant experience



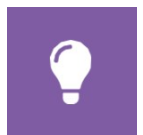
Generous pension contributions



Send candidates pre-interview guidance



Flexible working opportunities



Use structured interviews, with diverse panels



Innovative



Technologically savvy



Recent graduate



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3. Be flexible about flexible work



Advertise the right to flexible work from day 1



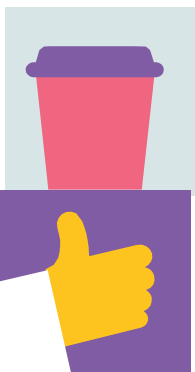
Adopt reason-neutral flexible working policies



Support your line managers



Actively promote flexible working to 50+



“I’m tired from work, housework and looking after older parents – it’s like drowning.”

Over 50s employee



4. Encourage career development at all ages



 Make sure training is being offered to everyone and discussed regularly

 Think creatively about career paths – it's not just about training!

 Offer a Mid-life MOT

A framework for Mid-life MOTs

Work



Wealth



Health



Emotional/
psychological



5. Health support for all



Make sure your policies and processes are clear and visible



Support your line managers to be confident to talk to their direct reports about health needs



Make health and wellbeing part of your regular conversations with staff of all ages



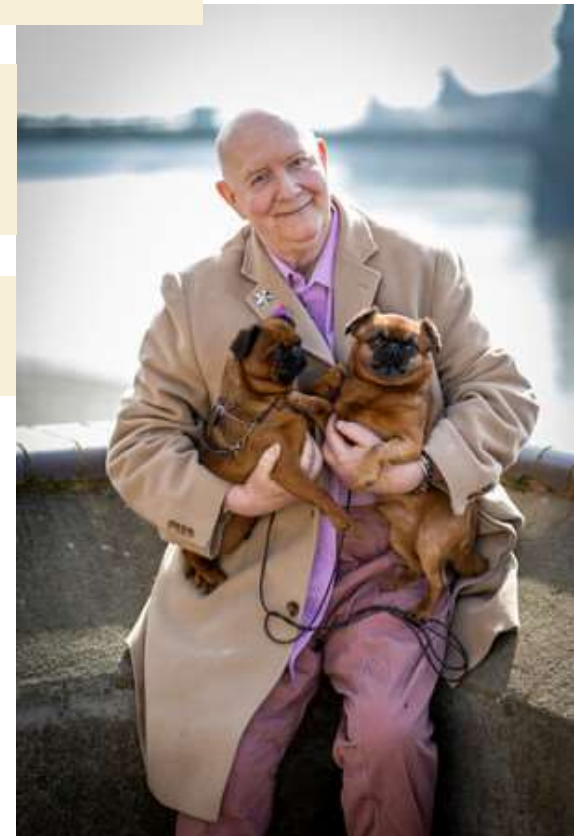
Foster open conversations about menopause



“My manager really understands. When I had time off last year for depression, she would check in on me to see if I was okay, there was never any pressure. When I am in work and I need to move around a bit to help with the back pain, she just says ‘do what is best for you.’”



“I felt really let down by my manager, she did not understand the practices and policies the organisation has about sickness absence, and she offered no help or support about adjustments. She is young and does ask the ‘how are you’, but doesn’t listen, or even try to understand the experiences that I face every day.”



What are the benefits of joining the network?

By signing the Pledge:

You become part of a growing network of employers committed to learning from each other and sharing their experiences.



Benefits include:



Monthly newsletter sharing latest news and links to resources



Future opportunities to help get involved and shape the work



Invites to regular webinars covering all areas of the Pledge



A chance to share your story and examples of good practice



6 and 12 month review calls with team



Sign up to the Age-friendly Employer Pledge today and show you recognise the value of older workers.

Visit our website <https://ageing-better.org.uk/age-friendly-employer-pledge> or reach out with any questions to EmployerPledge@ageing-better.org.uk



John Kiernan

What are the *perceived* challenges of recruiting from an ageing labour market?



GROW toolkit – 3 new tools

Creating a new inclusive job advert template

New interview invitation and scheduling form

How to talk about flexible working with candidates during the recruitment process

Go to:

ageing-better.org.uk/grow-a-new-toolkit



1. New job advert template

Addressing the need to promote more flexible

Focus on specific skills

Conscious focus to cut stereotypical language

Promoting employer benefits



Inclusive job advert: Template View (to copy)

[Role Name] ([Specify working patterns])

- [Salary];
- [Location];
- [Contract type];
- [Flexible work patterns];



We offer [describe the top 2 or 3 benefits you offer].



[Company name] is looking for a [short description on the role you are recruiting for]. [Description of the team this role is part of]. The ideal candidate has [specify top 2 or 3 details about what is expected from this role].

Responsibilities:

- [List of up to 5 key responsibilities];

Requirements:

- [List of up to 5 key requirements];

Flexible working:



2. Interview invitation and scheduling form



Addressing the issue where older applicants may not have much recent experience of the recruitment process, and in particular the interview and any tests and what sort of preparatory information is useful

Older workers wanted more specific information about interview logistics, they found this solution to be straightforward and efficient.

HR decision makers found the form easy to integrate into existing processes

Downloadable template

Subject line: Your [X] at [Company name]
Dear [Candidate's name], We're delighted to be able to invite you to [Type of session] for the [Role name] role at [Company name].
Schedule Click on the link below to schedule your interview. You'll be able to choose your preferred time and other options to suit you best. [Link to form] Once you select your preferences, you will receive an email confirming the details about your interview. Please call [Phone number] if you'd prefer to schedule on the phone. This form will take approximately [number] minutes to complete.
About this [Type of session] <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Length:</i> [number] minutes (we can take breaks)• <i>Location:</i> Remote (call with or without video) or in person• <i>Format:</i> The [Type of session] will be in a [describe how you will run the session, e.g. question-and-answer, task based] format. [Describe the session in a bit more detail]. You'll be able to raise questions and subjects for discussion.• <i>Preparation:</i> [Describe any preparations the candidate might need to do]
If you are disabled and would like us to make adjustments to the [Type of session] (or require them for any other reasons), please add them to the scheduling system or let me know directly.
Please do contact me if you have any queries in the meantime. Kind regards, [Name of line manager or person responsible for answering questions] [Role, Company name]

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3. How to talk about flexible working with candidates during the recruitment process



Key driver for older workers in job consideration

Line managers wanted to know about working patterns options early in the recruitment process

Method to encourage employers to decide in advance what would be acceptable

3. How to talk about flexible working with candidates during the recruitment process



Discuss and decide possible working patterns internally

Add the available working patterns to your job ad

Do not ask about working pattern preferences until you make an offer



GROW toolkit – 3 new tools

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