

Age Friendly York

Your Time (Employment) - Baseline Assessment

August 2020 (Accessible version)

Overview

We'll be looking at how older people can make productive and rewarding use of their time, by carrying out a range of Your Time checks against the World Health Organisation (WHO) age friendly standards. These have been split into Leisure and employment with this report focusing on employment. The relevant WHO checks are:

- A range of flexible and appropriately paid opportunities for older people to work is promoted
- Discrimination on the basis of age alone is forbidden in the hiring, retention, promotion and training of employees
- Work places are adapted to meet the needs of disabled people
- Training in post-retirement options is provided for older workers
- Self-employment options for older people are promoted and supported

Background

There have been a series of reports written about older employees to provide some context to both the historical attitude and policy towards the older workforce and the considered impacts going forward:

“The last 50 years have seen major changes when it comes to employment among older adults. There have been two distinct periods. From the 1970s to the mid-1990s, employment among older adults fell, driven mainly by falling employment among older men. Causes included the changing sectoral composition of the economy and government policies in this period – such as the ‘Job Release Scheme’ – which explicitly discouraged employment among older adults. This trend changed direction from the 1990s, with strong increases in employment among older adults. The rise in older-age employment was mainly driven by rising employment among older women, boosted since 2010 by increases in the female state pension age.”

(source: [A U-shaped Crisis](#) – Nuffield Foundation – April 21)

“Mid-life support enables people to work for as long as they want to. In turn, employers can hold on to their skills and experiences, deploy staff effectively and benefit from age-diverse workforces”.

(Source: Mid-life Support: Insight for Employers (Aug 2019) states - The Centre for Ageing Better)

“By 2025 there will be one million more people in the workplace over the age of 50 and no fewer than one in three of the workforce will be over the age of 50”

(Source: Mercer’s Workforce Monitor, March 2018).

“More than half of us have not considered our hopes and ambitions after the age of 60 even though there is an estimated 12 million people in the UK heading towards insufficient retirement income”

(Source: Department of Works and Pensions 2011 & 2014)

Challenges in working during mid life

There are unique circumstances when looking at the people employed nationally in York over 50:

- One in five workers aged 50-69 are self-employed (more than any other age group)
- There are three times more women than men working part-time that are aged 50-64
- The gender pay gap is larger for women that are 50+
- Median weekly earning begin to fall for people in their 50’s and 60’s, particularly those that are full-time
- a third of employed people aged 50 to retirement age are low to middle income which creates an increased risk of health conditions from mid-life onwards and is the single largest determinant of people falling out of work.
- People that are in their 50’s and unemployed are twice as likely as the youngest adults to be long-term unemployed
- Health is the leading reason for people aged 50 – 64 to be out of work
- More than a third in the age bracket (45-54) that has a dependent child in the home also provides regular care to a relative *(Source: office of national statistics 2019).*
- Where there are carer responsibilities there are challenges with juggling employment and a caring role/multiple caring responsibilities

- Most employers say they are committed to the principles of diversity and inclusion in their recruitment processes, but this broad commitment does not take the specific needs of older jobseekers into account (Source: [Shut Out – Centre for Ageing Better 2020](#))
- 36% of people aged 50-69 say they think their age would put them at a disadvantage in applying for jobs – more than any other age group. Meanwhile 17% say they have experienced ageism directly, having been turned down for a job because of their age. Nearly a third (29%) had been told they were unlikely to be successful going for a job role due to having too much experience (Source: [Too Much Experience – Centre for Ageing Better Feb 2021](#)).
- Often people who have been long term employed in a sector and then lose that work don't have those key qualifications, like maths, English and IT meaning that they can be overlooked at recruitment.

What an employee can do to provide a positive work experience and plan for the future

There is the opportunity to be pro-active in York around work retention:

- Maintaining good health by taking a [health check](#) every 5 years after the age of 40.
- Many large employers offer a range of physical activity opportunities through work which can be taken up by the employee
- Consider whether your working arrangements match your priorities in life and if not speak to your employer
- If you are a carer you could seek advice from the [York Carers Centre](#) from the Advice Worker or access an advocate
- Plan ahead, look to see if there are any pre-retirement courses. Take a [Mid-life MOT](#) offered by [The Money and Pensions Service](#). If you are self-employed, you can have a [free one-to-one mid-life MOT](#).
- You can get help to [plan your retirement income](#). You can also [check your State Pension](#) online to find out how much you might get and when you can claim it. The full State Pension is currently around £8,750 a year, but yours may be more or less, as it's based on your National Insurance record.

- If you are not currently in employment [Experience Counts](#) are a York based organisation that is passionate about people, helping over 50's find your hidden talents, build confidence and inform you about modern recruitment processes to help you move into employment, self-employment, volunteering or further training. Their programmes are dedicated to helping people 50+ get back into work or develop a roadmap to the next stage of your career, providing clarity and building confidence. People can check out our programmes which cover everything from CV advice to interview skills, career coaching and skills development.

Experience Counts: a case study

Sandra describes the Experience Counts programme “after 30 years in one organisation, I didn't realise how transferable my skills were or how the job had grown and developed and how my skills had grown too. Trying to put your personality on a piece of paper (CV or application form) is hard without waffling on. Simon and Julie, the trainers, kept me on track and helped me to recognise the skills and expertise I actually have and also how to put that in writing so that prospective employers could see what I had to offer.

The programme banished many of the myths and anxieties I had going back into the jobs market. I was frightened to death of having to face interviews. The role play between the trainers showed me what to expect and how to prepare so that I was more relaxed about the process”.

- Ensure you have English and maths (and some IT) qualifications, which are accessible for free (for example the [York Learning](#), [York College](#) or the recently established Menfulness School) if you don't already have GCSE C or above in the subject. This can increase the chances of getting interview/employment.
- Rest Less work with national hand-picked [age diverse employers](#) who have a commitment to embracing multi-generational workforces. Whether you're looking to go part-time, change career or simply find a new job that you enjoy – they have thousands of roles hiring now across the UK.

Business umbrella groups

Business related umbrella groups can make a significant contribution towards positive opportunities for older workers. We are fortunate in York to be well represented:

Indi York - Indie York brings over 200 independent businesses together to support them and help them grow and thrive.

York Bid - The York Business Improvement District, or BID, is where businesses work together to invest in services, special projects and events. There are now more than 200 BID's across the UK, delivering economic and environmental benefits.

Make It York- was established in 2015 with the coming together of the marketing and promotion, economic development, and tourism functions in the city. As a commercial business with a strong sense of social purpose, their mission is to grow the economic prosperity and the wider wellbeing of York. They achieve this by focussing on two cardinal points: economy and place.

Local Enterprise partnership – are supporting businesses across the county. The area in York covers York and North Yorkshire.

Social Vision – support a range of social enterprises, charities and small businesses in York

Hospitality Association York (HAY) - To work collectively as an Association to deliver a progressive, passionate, and unique hospitality experience to all visitors; local, national, and international, to this ever-changing and always amazing city of York.

York Professionals - support and champion York's professional service providers, helping businesses in the finance, people, creative, digital, property, legal, marketing, business support and charity sectors develop and grow.

Employment Good Practice

The Centre for Aging Better have set out [5 ways to retain and make the most of an ageing workforce:](#)

1. Be flexible about flexible working
2. Hire age positively
3. Ensure everyone has the health support they need
4. Encourage career development at all ages
5. Create an age positive culture

There is a clear role for employers in providing mid-life support which could benefit their organisation and employees:

- Mid-life support has the potential to improve staff wellbeing.
- Improved staff wellbeing enables people to work for longer, have a better transition to retirement and better wellbeing in retirement.

- Supporting the health, safety and wellbeing of their (older) workforce enables retention of older workers. Employers can hold on to the skills and experiences that these workers have built up over decades, deploy staff effectively within their organisations and benefit from age-diverse workforces. – Mid-life support incorporates career and retirement planning. Oversight of these naturally resides with employers.
- Employers could have a policy in place to support unpaid carers about flexible working arrangements
- People already look to their employers for support, information and guidance on their pension. It makes sense for employers to expand the support, information and guidance they provide to encompass other important issues.
- Overall, mid-life support interventions are an employee benefit that can contribute to a strong employer brand and ensure future commercial success.

(Source: [Midlife support an insight for employers – Centre for Ageing Better Aug 2019](#))

York Carers Centre – offers employers the chance to become recognised as '[Carer Friendly](#)'. This is achieved by working through a simple application process and set of criteria. Employers interested in learning more about working towards York Carers Centre Carer Friendly Employer Charter will be provided with a pack of information, support and guidance.

York has a [Skills Plan](#) that ran up to 2020 which focused on: developing, training and attracting talent to York; and creating a prosperous city for all. Following on from this a [York Skills and Employment Board](#) has been established to ensure any skill plans support York's 10 year and 1 year recovery strategies and the York Economic Strategy.

Employer Case Study - Home Instead York

Their recruitment processes is designed to identify people with bags of empathy for older people and a caring attitude. This combined with their flexible contracts means that the role of CAREGiver can appeal to people with caring responsibilities for others - young and old. Well over half of their team of CAREGivers are over the age of 50 (62%). It's common for people to join their team after a career change or after a long career break to raise a family. Home Instead are interested in people's aptitude to caregiving, not their ability to complete long application forms or navigate tricky interview questions so they offer support wherever it's needed.

Home Instead have found that taking this approach not only helps their recruitment, but also their retention. By investing the time and effort in finding the people who are a great match for the type of work a CAREGiver does, the more likely it is to be a longer lasting and mutually beneficial relationship between Home Instead as the employer and the CAREGivers they employ. The other hugely important benefit is that the clients appreciate the life experience and maturity that their CAREGivers bring to the job.

Employer Case Study - Aviva

Aviva carried out PR work to persuade people that call centre work is not just for young people. They appointed a Recruitment Champion for older workers internally and incentivised their older employees to act as ambassadors to help recruit other older workers. The company adopted a media strategy to attract a wide age range. For example, they used radio stations aimed at older listeners.

Employment and long term conditions

A new report warns that more support is needed to help people manage their conditions in the workplace if the state pension is to rise further. With one in three workers now over the age of fifty, and one in five men and women aged 50-54 managing at least one long-term condition, poor health is by far the most common reason for people aged 50-64 to leave work prematurely.

Good quality work can provide – or, at least, support – financial security, physical and mental health, housing and community connections people need to enjoy their later life. But both people aged 50 and over and people living with long-term conditions and disabilities face barriers to employment.

The pandemic has not only widened the disability employment gap and the age employment gap, but also the gap between those in good and bad employment. Their research, conducted over the first year of the pandemic, indicates that employers who were already supportive of workers' health stepped up during the crisis.

(Source: Centre for Ageing Better - [Working well? How the pandemic changed work for people with health conditions](#) – June 2021)

The COVID impact

Nationally

“Among over 50’s whose incomes have reduced as a result of the pandemic, the poorest are most likely to be drawing on their savings to make ends meet” Centre for Aging Better

- Between March and December 2020 the employment rate of people aged 50-64 dropped by 1.3%
- 13% of people in this age and time bracket changed their pension plans
- A significant percentage of these people who were working are now retired (6% of those aged 60-67 and 11% of those aged 71 and over)

In York

- Increase in unemployment by 141% with many over 50 not expected to return to work (*source: York Mix – Jun 2020*)
- Areas most reliant on retail and hospitality have been impacted the most (*Source: combined authority report*).
- However by April 2021 the unemployment level for the 50+ in York dropped to 3.1% which is lower than the 25-49 age group at 4%. This also shows favourably against the regional figure of 4.8% and national of 5.0%. However this is still significantly higher than York's pre-covid unemployment rates of 1.1-1.4%. (*Source: nomis*)
- Before the pandemic, older workers were less likely to return to work after spells of unemployment than younger workers. Among all those unemployed in their late 50s, less than one in three returned to work over the course of a year, compared with about half of those unemployed in their mid 30s.
- Among older workers, the long-term unemployed are much less likely to re-enter work than those who have recently become unemployed. Those with lower levels of education and women have also historically been particularly less likely to re-enter work after becoming unemployed.

Sevice Case Study - Action Towards Inclusion is funded by the National Lottery and the European Social Fund for York, North Yorkshire and East Riding area. The aim is to help women overcome barriers to employment, supporting you to achieve at your own pace and in a safe environment, with flexible help and encouragement. A Kyra Key Worker who will help long term unemployed women in York progress towards employment, training, education and job-search. At the same time their support will help combat a range of social issues, including poverty and social exclusion.

- There are a number of reasons that finding new work may be challenging for people in their 50s and 60s. Most older workers do not have much recent experience of searching for work: over two-thirds (69%) of 55-year-old workers have been with their employer for more than five years. Older workers are also less likely than

younger workers to change occupation (which may be necessary as e-commerce continues to boom compared with the high street). Only 3% of workers aged 50–69 typically change occupation over the course of a year, around half the rate of workers in their mid 30s. (Source: *Understanding the changing patterns of work at older ages – IFS -July 2021*)

- Older people who have been long term employed in a sector that then lose that work may not have key qualifications meaning that they can be overlooked at recruitment. This issue is exacerbated due to COVID due to the increase in loss of jobs.
- York Learning can offer this, as well as other providers (eg York College) and I think it's worth adding that increasing awareness of this offer can only be a good thing in terms of IAG, hopefully takeup and then people having more chance of getting to interview/employment.