

Contents

Click the links below to be taken to the page

- 01 Welcome
- 01 Choices at 50+
- 04 Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins
- 04 National Network of Work Clubs Launched
- 05 Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism
- 05 Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect
- 06 News Briefs
- 07 50+ Labour Market Spotlight
- 08 Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs
- 09 Did You Know?
- 09 ESF News



Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the European Social Fund.

This project is partially funded by the European Social Fund



European Union
European Social Fund
 Investing in jobs and skills

Welcome to the April e-newsletter

Welcome to the April edition of **50+ Matters** and another provider case study: AgeUK North Tyneside who take a whole person approach to their services for the older jobseeker, meeting their varied needs to help them become 'job ready'. A national network of Job Clubs is launched, and news of an increase in the National Minimum Wage.

We welcome your views and comments about the content of this e-newsletter and any suggestions you have for items and features you would like to see included in future.

Choices at 50+

"Age UK North Tyneside became involved in a service for the over 50s because we identified a need and that people who were out of work or facing redundancy did not receive specific support that acknowledged their complex situation."



50+ Choices for Older Workers

Romi Jones, Head of Community Services explained the 'grieving' process that people experience when they are made redundant and lose their jobs.

"We live in a society where so much of our identity is wrapped up in our work that when older people cannot continue in the kind of work they have known for years, then the grieving process they go through is real; not just that work is scarce and they

need to think about the next job, it's that they are never going to return to that previous part of their lives. Upskilling and career change is the only option."

Romi used this scenario as a role play exercise in a 50+ Matters seminar with delegates who normally work directly with older job seekers: told they were no longer needed and faced with learning a new career, they then discussed their feelings of

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

Contents

Click the links below to be taken to the page

01 Welcome

01 Choices at 50+

04 Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins

04 National Network of Work Clubs Launched

05 Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism

05 Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect

06 News Briefs

07 50+ Labour Market Spotlight

08 Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs

09 Did You Know?

09 ESF News



Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the European Social Fund.

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 01

'anger', 'outrage' and being 'put on the scrapheap' which sum up this feeling of being 'bereft' that advisors have to identify and understand.

North Tyneside is a large borough in the North East, badly affected by the decline in traditional industries (ship building, mining and fishing). The growth of part-time temporary work in the emerging industries ('call centre', retail, care, and service sectors) represents a fundamental change that has led to challenges in relation to re-skilling and securing employment for those displaced by the new changes.

The borough suffers from high levels of deprivation, disability, poverty and poor health. Of its 120 Super Output Areas in North Tyneside, 32 are ranked in the 20 per cent most deprived nationally. The barriers faced by older people when looking for employment are an example of the 'complex needs' described by Romi:

- Outdated skills
- Health issues, possibly from working in heavy manual trades
- Caring responsibilities, both for children and elders
- Lack of financial support, while people are re-training
- Age discrimination.

Age UK in North Tyneside has developed a specialism in helping 50+ individuals like these, and others facing redundancy, unemployment, career change, retraining and coping with health issues.

Changing policy partnership funding provided by the European Social Fund ^[1] enables Age UK to maintain closer links with employers and generally support older people in the workforce.

The whole person approach adopted in North Tyneside ensures that once through the doors, enquirers are linked into a variety of services depending on their needs. People are not mandated to come and they never turn anyone away.



One-to-one advice and guidance

Successful partnership working (with the North Tyneside Council Adult Learning Alliance) has been useful in outreaching to the local community - at learning fairs and even in the local shopping centre.

At Age UK North Tyneside, the staff pride themselves on their person-centred Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) project – 50+ Choices, a service which began in 2004. A free and independent service, referrals are made from organisations throughout North Tyneside.

The two methods of delivery, specifically for 50+:

■ One-to-one IAG

Each older person receives a 1-2 hour session with one of their two trained IAG advisors to identify the key issues they are facing. Their needs ('looking for a job' or 'just been made redundant') are usually multi-layered and much wider than simple job search advice and support.

■ Mid Life Moves

In a modular programme of 12 sessions over a three-week period, IAG advisors Ian Horsburgh and Kelly Oliver work with clients in groups to foster peer support and combat isolation (something they have found invaluable, especially with male clients who come from a manual, industrial background and are unused to talking about themselves).

North Tyneside's services include:

- Back on Board (BoB): one-to-one with trained advisors
- Mid-Life Moves: Group modular programme, each session on a key topic, eg, Interview Skills, Managing Money,

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 03

Contents

Click the links below to be taken to the page

01 Welcome

01 Choices at 50+

04 Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins

04 National Network of Work Clubs Launched

05 Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism

05 Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect

06 News Briefs

07 50+ Labour Market Spotlight

08 Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs

09 Did You Know?

09 ESF News



Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the European Social Fund.

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 02

Self-confidence, Dealing with Stress

- IT Training: Short courses in Age UK's own IT suite
- BoB 4 Jobs: Help with job applications and on-line job search.

In the programme IT for All, a 'Walk Through Windows' has proved a popular course for the over 50s. IT tutor, Roy explains that rather than starting with MS Office the programme invites them to try digital photography or art using the computer. Familiarising themselves with computers in a fun and interesting way can lead to progression routes and much cross-referral (to Back on Board, employment and volunteering).

The prevalence of online job search is used to reinforce the importance of becoming IT literate. And as a useful research tool (for work and leisure), supporting clients to use IT helps them to re-engage and find a footing back in society.



A fun start to IT.

Clients are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to gain skills and experience through the Volunteering Network ^[2], who are invited to be one of the guest speakers on the Back on Board programme. The Community Development Team and Information Centre functions, along with the community café knit together activities and information provision to create welcoming meeting spaces for people, the whole person approach espoused by North Tyneside.

Case study

Alison came to Age UK North Tyneside's Back on Board Project in June last year, having seen an article in the Evening Chronicle Jobs Supplement, advertising a Coffee

Afternoon. The Coffee Afternoon was designed to create an informal, relaxed atmosphere where people could meet and talk to Project workers. Alison arranged a one-to-one appointment with a Back on Board advisor. After discussion, it was agreed that a positive move forward would be for Alison to enrol in the next Mid Life Moves.

Mid Life Moves concentrated on group work and peer support as part of a modular programme with sessions focused on key issues such as benefits, managing finance, job search/interview techniques, health promotion, volunteering and self-employment.

Alison commented, "The course gave me confidence, as well as identifying my skills that could be transferred into a new role that perhaps I hadn't thought of before. It's not easy to sell yourself, but you must think of making a good impression nowadays, via a good CV and covering letter and ensure you stay determined and focused to enable you to get work.

It's easy to feel isolated and feel you are alone in searching for employment. It's also easy to start feeling down, but I've got my confidence back and ready to take on a different job role if required, or even re-train for another role."



Of its 120 Super Output Areas in North Tyneside, 32 are ranked in the 20 per cent most deprived nationally.

Office for National Statistics

^[1] University of Sunderland, Durham County Council, Mental Health Matters, North East Migration Partnership, Sunderland and Newcastle Universities.

^[2] North Shields, Whitley Bay, Wallsend and Killingworth.

Contents

Click the links below to be taken to the page

01 Welcome

01 Choices at 50+

04 Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins

04 National Network of Work Clubs Launched

05 Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism

05 Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect

06 News Briefs

07 50+ Labour Market Spotlight

08 Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs

09 Did You Know?

09 ESF News



Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the European Social Fund.

04

Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins

The programme to re-assess people currently on Incapacity Benefit (IB) to see if they are fit enough to do work of some kind has begun. Under the scheme, around 10,000 existing IB claimants will be re-assessed every week.

According to Chris Grayling, the Employment Minister, a significant number of those going through the Work Capability Assessment process are expected to be assessed as being “fit to work immediately”.

Referring to results from pilot assessment schemes that have already been run in Burnley and Aberdeen, which found that “almost a third” of IB claimants were fit for work, the minister commented:

“The trial results show that, if replicated nationally, we could expect around half a million people to be found fit for work over the next three years as the reassessment exercise is completed.” he wrote.

Just over 1,600 people were assessed in the two pilots, and of these 32 per cent were found fit for work straight away and moved to Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA), while 38 per cent were found “able to work with the right support” and were moved into the ‘work related activity group’ (WRAG) and expected to prepare to return to work.

As the IB re-assessment programme is rolled out nationally, anybody ruled fit for work immediately will be moved off incapacity benefit onto JSA and expected to actively seek work.

Nearly half the people currently receiving incapacity benefit in the UK are aged 50+.

National Network of Work Clubs Launched

A new national network of Work Clubs was launched at the beginning of April at 35 Exchange Group centres across the country.

The Work Clubs, which are being established in association with Jobcentre Plus, will offer unemployed people a range of free services to help them to improve their employability and skills which will include IAG sessions, Skills Health checks, Skills for Life and IT qualifications, and a range of employability training modules. In addition Exchange Group Work Club members will be able to access the centre resources, such as IT and Internet access to help with their job searching.

The centres, which are designed to provide a ‘one stop shop for jobseekers’ are located in places such as Public Libraries and retail units in town centre shopping centres. All are equipped with on average 20 PCs, high speed internet access and fully qualified staff.

James Farquharson, CEO of Exchange Group, commented:

“Exchange Group has committed to meet the challenge of helping people get the skills to get back to work. With the support of organisations like Jobcentre Plus, learndirect and the Skills Funding Agency we believe that our network of Work Clubs can make a real impact.”

At the moment there are centres in London, the South East, the South West, Midlands, North East and North West. For more details visit:

www.exchangegroup.co.uk/docs/WorkClub.pdf

Contents

Click the links below to be taken to the page

01 Welcome

01 Choices at 50+

04 Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins

04 National Network of Work Clubs Launched

05 Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism

05 Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect

06 News Briefs

07 50+ Labour Market Spotlight

08 Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs

09 Did You Know?

09 ESF News



Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the European Social Fund.

05

Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism

According to a new survey by Employers Forum on Age (EFA), findings reinforce the theory that employers have a largely unconscious tendency to recruit and promote people the same age as themselves or to others in their company.

The online survey of just over 2,000 people conducted for the EFA, found over a third (35 per cent) of respondents felt they have been discriminated against when trying to move company or applying for a more senior position in the same company. 'Age' was the most common reason (17 per cent), closely followed by favouritism / the other candidate fitting the company's 'personality' better (16 per cent).

The study also found that almost two thirds (62 per cent) of employees said that all, most or some of their colleagues are similar to them. When asked what it is they had in common with their co-workers, age was found to be the most common factor (68

per cent), followed by gender (62 per cent) and social background (53 per cent).

Denise Keating, Chief Executive, Employers Forum on Age, commented:

"While age is the biggest discriminator in the workplace, it is important not to overlook other biases, such as favouritism or gender. There seems to be a very high instance of people being selected for a new job or promotion if their 'face fits', which unfortunately means some people feel that talent isn't enough to overcome prejudices. While many companies have solid diversity policies, this may not run throughout the company down to individual team level, which is an issue that needs to be addressed."

Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect

Two important sets of provisions contained in the Equality Act 2010, came into force at the start of April. These are:

1. The extension of 'positive action' rules to cover recruitment and promotion.

This means that employers can now recruit a job candidate, or promote an existing employee who has a protected characteristic (such as 'age') if they are of equal merit to another candidate or employee under consideration and the employer reasonably thinks that people with that characteristic are either under-represented in the workforce or suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic.

However, employers will only be able to take such positive action where it is a

proportionate way of addressing the under-representation or disadvantage. And they will not be allowed to choose a less suitable candidate or employee just because they have a protected characteristic that is under-represented or disadvantaged.

2. The new Public Sector Equality Duty.

This aims to ensure public sector organisations have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations across all of the protected characteristics.

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 06

Contents

Click the links below to be taken to the page

- 01 Welcome
- 01 Choices at 50+
- 04 Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins
- 04 National Network of Work Clubs Launched
- 05 Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism
- 05 Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect
- 06 News Briefs
- 07 50+ Labour Market Spotlight
- 08 Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs
- 09 Did You Know?
- 09 ESF News



Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the European Social Fund.

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 05

For the first time, public sector bodies will be required to demonstrate equality across all strands, including age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. This builds on the existing duties relating to disability, gender and race, and improves the coverage in relation to gender reassignment.

In addition, the new Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) codes of practice on employment, services and equal pay, also came into force on the 6 April 2011.

For more information see:

www.equalities.gov.uk/equality_act_2010.aspx

News Briefs

Micro Firms and Start-Ups Exempted From Regulations

In its drive to promote job growth, the Government has announced a general moratorium from all new domestic regulations for three years for businesses employing fewer than 10 people, and for genuine new start ups.

Speaking to the Federation of Small Businesses, Mark Prisk MP, Small Business Minister, said the Government wanted smaller enterprises to be thinking about how to grow their business, not how to deal with the latest request from government.

He confirmed that companies with fewer than 250 employees would continue to be exempted from the Right to Request Time to Train regulations and summarised other actions the Government had, or was, taking to reduce red tape:

- Comprehensive Employment Law review
- Reform of employment tribunals
- Smaller firms to have lighter audit requirements
- Transformation in the approach government takes to regulation with the “One In, One Out” system (where one regulation is scrapped for every new rule proposed)
- End to the ‘goldplating’ of European rules (over-interpreting EU directives)
- Sunset clauses built into future regulations so that ineffective rules will die a natural death.

Increasing Number of Job Vacancies Placed with Agencies

The latest *Report on Jobs* from the REC and KPMG, shows that employer demand for staff rose last month.

The survey, which tracks recruitment activity among 400 recruitment agencies and consultancies in the UK each month, found there was a marked improvement in the demand for staff in March, with permanent vacancies rising at their fastest pace since April 2010 and temporary / contract staff vacancies increasing at the sharpest rate since July 2007.

However, the report concludes that the UK’s job market “remains volatile.”

National Minimum Wage to Rise Again

The Government has accepted the independent Low Pay Commission’s (LPC) recommendations for a rise in National Minimum Wage (NMW) rates later this year.

From 1 October the following rates will come into effect:

- The adult rate will increase by just over 2.5 per cent (15p) to £6.08 an hour;
- The rate for 18–20-year-olds will increase by 6p to £4.98 an hour;
- The rate for 16–17-year-olds will increase by 4p to £3.68 an hour; and
- The rate for apprentices will increase by 10p to £2.60 an hour.

Contents

Click the links below to be taken to the page

- 01 Welcome
- 01 Choices at 50+
- 04 Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins
- 04 National Network of Work Clubs Launched
- 05 Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism
- 05 Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect
- 06 News Briefs
- 07 50+ Labour Market Spotlight
- 08 Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs
- 09 Did You Know?
- 09 ESF News



Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the European Social Fund.



50+ Labour Market Spotlight

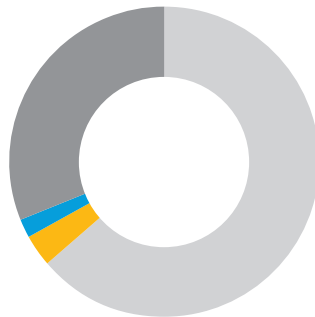
A monthly look at the older worker employment figures.

Latest 50-64 Employment Figures

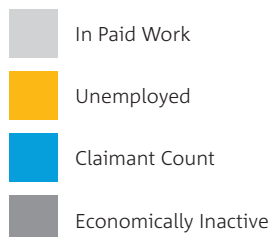
December 2010 – February 2011

Source: Office for National Statistics, Labour Market Statistics: April 2011

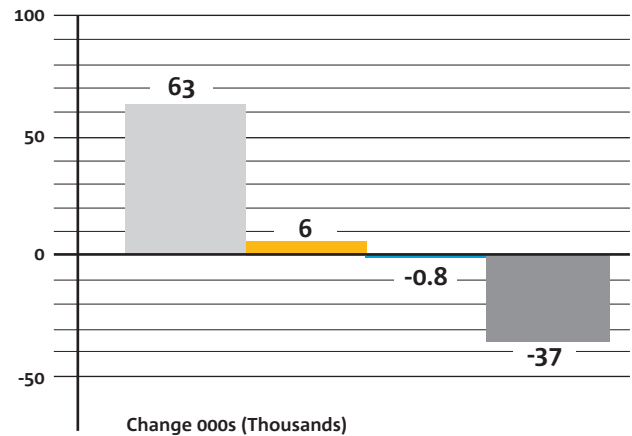
Current Totals:



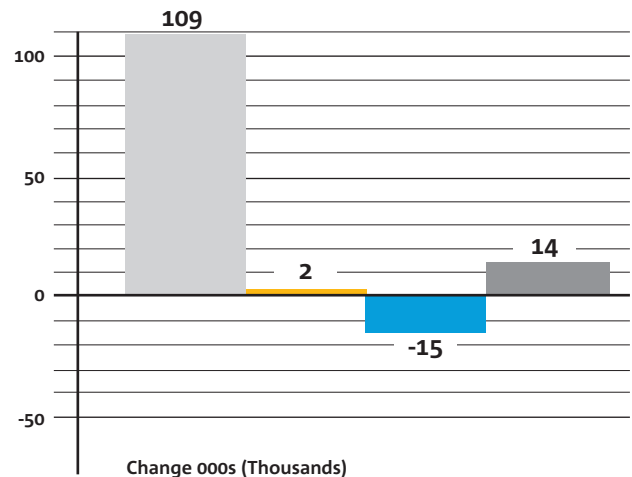
In Paid Work	7.35 million
Unemployed	370,000
Claimant Count	219,000
Economically Inactive	3.58million



Change 000s (Thousands) over the previous three months



Change 000 (Thousands) versus same three months the previous year



Latest 65+ Employment Figures

November 2010 – January 2011

	All 65 and over	Men 65 and over	Women 65 and over
In Paid Work (000s)	885	516	369
Change over past year (000s)	+113	+47	+65
Economically Inactive (millions)	9.05	3.94	5.11
Change over past year (000s)	+87	+69	+18

Contents

Click the links below to be taken to the page

01 Welcome

01 Choices at 50+

04 Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins

04 National Network of Work Clubs Launched

05 Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism

05 Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect

06 News Briefs

07 50+ Labour Market Spotlight

08 Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs

09 Did You Know?

09 ESF News



Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the European Social Fund.

Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs

Recruiting new employees takes too long and is too costly according to a new survey covering more than 500 small and medium-sized businesses across the United Kingdom.

With the new Work Programme due to start on the 1st June, MAXIMUS UK and the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) decided to ask employers about the barriers to recruiting skilled and experienced workers. The survey, conducted in February with small firms in all sectors, found that over 80 per cent of the companies which responded employed fewer than 100 staff and they identified recruitment as a great challenge in managing their workforce.

At a time of rising unemployment and increased competition for vacancies, the survey results point to a general dissatisfaction with recruitment services in the UK. Recruitment is particularly difficult for smaller companies, says the BCC, because it places extra demands on limited resources in an already challenging economic climate.

Highlights of the survey results include:

- 43 per cent of companies responding to the survey estimated the cost of recruiting a new employee to be over £2000.

- Less than a quarter of the businesses surveyed have personnel departments to handle staffing and in over half, the business owner is responsible for recruitment.

- Only 3 per cent of the businesses regularly use a recruitment agency. Just over half use agencies occasionally, while 46 per cent said they would never use a staffing agency. Two-thirds of respondents cited high costs as a reason for not using external agencies and 11 per cent indicated that the use of staffing agencies is too time consuming.

Online job boards – websites that allow employers to post open job positions and job seekers to post their CVs – fare only slightly better. Almost one-fifth of respondents always use online job boards, 43 per cent sometimes use a job board, and 39 per cent said they never would. Nearly half of all companies responding to the survey indicated that the CVs they receive via online job boards do not match the requirements of their job openings, while 20% indicated that the use of job boards is too time consuming.



Did You Know?

A random selection of demographic, labour market and age and employment statistics that have caught our eye over the last month.

Unless stated otherwise, the statistics come from the Office for National Statistics.

- According to the Labour Force Survey, approximately 10 per cent of people in Great Britain aged between 16 and 69 (excluding retired people) are searching for work at any one time.
- The seasonally adjusted employment rates for people aged 50 - 64 working full time fell by 0.9 per cent and by 0.1 per cent for those working part-time between January-

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 09

08

Contents

Click the links below to be taken to the page

- 01 Welcome
- 01 Choices at 50+
- 04 Incapacity Benefit Re-assessment Programme Begins
- 04 National Network of Work Clubs Launched
- 05 Unconscious Bias Leads To Workplace Discrimination and Favouritism
- 05 Further Round of Equality Act Provisions Come Into Effect
- 06 News Briefs
- 07 50+ Labour Market Spotlight
- 08 Recruiting New Staff Too Time Consuming and Costly for SMEs
- 09 Did You Know?
- 09 ESF News



Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the European Social Fund.

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 08

March 2008 and October-December 2010.

- A larger proportion of men than women take early retirement. Only 6 per cent of women in the 55 - 59 age group were classified as retired in April-June 2010, compared with 19.6 per cent of men aged 60 - 64.

- The proportion of people aged 50 - 64 without qualifications who are in employment varies between the constituent parts of the United Kingdom:-

Proportion of 50 - 64-year-olds with no qualifications who are in employment

England	Scotland	Wales	N.Ireland
10.2%	11.7%	8.6%	23.9%

Period: April-June 2010.

ESF News

Update about TAEN ESF events

50+ Matters Seminar Series

Following our 50+ Matters seminar in Nottingham last month, the series is temporarily suspended until more of the 2011-2013 contracting round projects are in place. We are planning to resume the series in the Autumn, so watch this space...

50+ Works Training Events

The training events taking place in Manchester and Leeds in May are now fully booked. However, in order to meet the high demand there has been, we are now offering an additional event in London on 14 June.

These enhanced sessions are aimed at Centre Managers, Team Leaders and those in similar roles, who manage front line teams. As they are taking place in IT enabled suites, it will allow us to demonstrate how you, and your teams, can get the best from 50+ Works – the easy to use, comprehensive online guide on providing effective support to older customers. To book a place for the London event, please visit <http://taen.org.uk/esf/events>.

National Conference later This Year

As part of our national Technical Assistance project we are planning a conference for later this year, focusing on working with 50+ participants. The aim is that new projects starting up as part of the 2011-13 programme can benefit from good practice identified and used by projects running during the first half of the national programme in England, and that helped them achieve their successful outcomes with older participants.

Thus we would like to hear from any current projects that are drawing to a close and who have something to share in terms of support offered to this target group. Please do get in touch with us and we will fully acknowledge your contribution.

