



Age at Work The Value of older workers: Annual Report

**Year 4
(May 2022 to April 2023)**



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Introduction

The Age at Work Programme, now entering its fifth year, has been delivered by Age NI in partnership with Business in the Community NI, and counterparts in Scotland and Wales, funded with £2,244,944 by the National Lottery Community Fund. This programme directly addresses the challenges and opportunities for both older people and employers in an aging society.

Age at Work seeks to:

- support older workers and mature candidates to seek and stay in employment, helping them to earn sufficient income, stay connected and have a fuller working life.
- raise awareness of the impact of an ageing workforce and the need for an age-inclusive agenda in government, business, and wider society.
- encourage and support businesses to be more age-inclusive in recruiting, retaining, and retraining older workers.

In this fourth year, the programme has adapted to the post Covid-19 hybrid workplace but also has faced challenges of the growing cost of living crisis and return to work drive that has demanded the attention and time of many employers and HR professionals. The post-covid world has also seen more older workers wanting to return to work, recognising the social and mental health benefits the workplace offers, with the majority open to reskilling, even at a salary cut. Employers now face a workforce comprising five generations, and over 50's will make up half the adult population of the future.

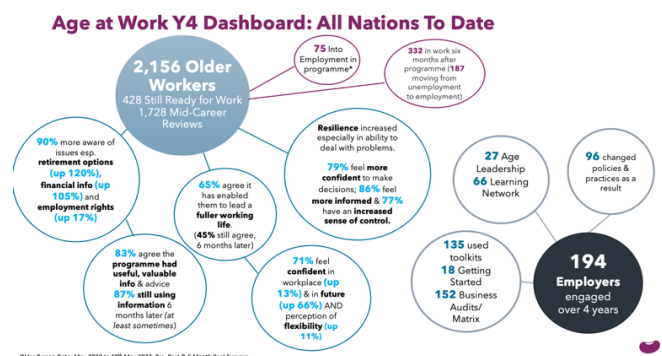
In the face of these challenges and opportunities, this independent research shows that the individual initiatives, and individual nations, as well as the Age at Work programme overall, have successfully delivered the desired outcomes of behavioural and attitudinal change, and the numbers of older people and businesses engaged are on track to meet the overall five year targets.

At the end of the fourth year, this Annual Report looks specifically at Social Return on Investment, to understand the social value of the programme. While Bean Research and Age at Work teams have tracked outcomes and outputs for individuals and organisations over the years, this SROI analysis pulls together the data, Impact Framework and insights to calculate the financial value to society of the impact of the Age at Work programme, as a whole.

This report has been written by Bean Research, appointed as evaluators of the Age at Work programme in 2020.

Summary of Findings

- At the end of Year Four of the programme, Age at Work has engaged **2,156** older workers and **194** employers. This year alone, 837 people have participated in the Mid Career Reviews or Still Ready for Work Programme; and 60 businesses have completed an Age Inclusive Business Review or Matrix.
- There is positive change to older workers' attitudes and behaviours, an increase in employment of older people and changed age-related practices for Employers. Mid-Career Reviews and Still Ready for Work Programmes are highly regarded).
- 90%** of older workers, are more aware and knowledgeable about issues covered in the programme, including employment rights, and financial and retirement options. Significantly, **87%** are still using the information or seeing the value of the support they have received in the Age at Work programme, six months later.
- The Age at Work programme also influences confidence, crucial in sustaining employment and healthy lives - more confident in making decisions (**79%**), and **77%** feel an increased sense of control. Overall, there is a **74% increase in confidence** around future employment: a **66% increase in confidence** about the future.
- The Mid-Career Reviews and Still Ready for Work programmes are also changing behaviour. **65%** feel the Age at Work programme has enabled them to lead a fuller working life (up 12% on the measure at the end of Year 3), and **45%** of all respondents still feel this way **6 months later**.
- The Still Ready for Work Programme is having an impact on employment. While **75** individuals are recorded as moving directly into employment straight on from their placements and coaching, **332** self-report that they are in employment 6 months later (with **187** moving from unemployment to employment).
- Over four years, the Age at Work programme has engaged **194** employers. **135** have used the Age at Work toolkits and **152** have completed business audits. Half the employers (**96**) have changed policies and practices as a direct result.
- Social Return on Investment analysis shows that over the last four years, the Age at Work programme has generated **£6.6 million** in benefits to society. Wetherefore, estimate that for every **£1** spent on the Age at Work programme, approximately **£4.25** of social value is generated (over three years) through economic benefits and avoided spending, and the gains for participants through increased confidence, practical guidance and employment outcomes.



Context

The Age at Work Programme was created to address the challenges and opportunities for both older people and employers in an aging society.

Today there are five generations in the UK workforce working side by side. There are 10.5 million people over 50 in work, equivalent to one-third of the workforce¹. By the mid-2030s half, the adult population will be over 50². Retaining older workers in the workplace has never been more important.

Those challenges and opportunities have shifted and evolved due in large part to the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis. Prior to the Covid-19 crisis, employment among older workers was at its highest since the Labour Force Survey began collecting such data in 1975, with 73% of people between the ages of 50-64 in the workforce in 2019.³

In the early stages of the pandemic (and in our 2021 report), we predicted that that number would decrease. The Resolution Foundation confirmed that Covid created a “U-shaped” employment shock that disproportionately impacted older and younger workers.⁴ In fact, 43% of the overall rise in economic inactivity in the UK since the pandemic was due to increased economic inactivity among 50- to 69-year-olds.⁵ In February 2022, almost two years after the initial lockdown and the subsequent furloughs and layoffs, 63% of adults aged 50 to 70 reported leaving work sooner than expected.⁶

While older workers over 60 were most likely to cite retirement, workers in their 50s cited stress or mental health (19%) or a change in lifestyle (14%) as their cause for leaving work. It appears that redundancies and dismissals played an outsized role in the increase in older workers leaving the labour force 2020 (37%), but much less so in 2021 as the economy recovered (11%).^{3 & 4}

Regardless of the reason for leaving the workforce, the data shows that the financial implications will likely be longstanding. The average employee who loses or leaves their job at 55 has a private pension savings of approximately £32,812, which is 34% less than someone who retires at 68.⁷ Those that left work since the pandemic are also more likely to report reduced savings (51%, compared with 33%).⁴

¹ Office for National Statistics (2022) Labour market overview, UK: February 2022.

² Department for Work and Pensions (2017) Fuller Working Lives: evidence base 2017. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fuller-working-lives-evidence-base-2017>

³ Centre for Ageing Better, "Summary | The State of Ageing 2022," [Online]. Available: <https://ageing-better.org.uk/summary-state-ageing-2022>

⁴ Resolution Foundation, "A U-shaped crisis The impact of the Covid-19 crisis on older workers," [Online]. Available: <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/a-u-shaped-crisis/>.

⁵ IFS, "The rise in economic inactivity among people in their 50s and 60s," [Online]. Available: <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/rise-economic-inactivity-among-people-their-50s-and-60s>.

⁶ Census 2021, "Reasons for workers aged over 50 years leaving employment since the start of the coronavirus pandemic,"

⁷ Centre for Ageing Better, "Have we saved enough? Do people approaching later life have an adequate retirement income?," [Online]. Available: <https://ageing-better.org.uk/resources/do-people-approaching-later-life-adequate-retirement-income>.

Older workers want to return to work

Now, people over the age of 50 seeking employment is on the rise. 32% of the retirees who said they would consider returning to work cited mental and social health, while 12% said they were driven by the rising cost of living, and 8% by the desire to increase their pensions. Notably, 47% stated a combination of all three as reason to return to work.⁸

Older workers planning to return to work say their primary ideals in finding a job are flexible working (36%), the ability to work from home (18%) and that works around their caring responsibilities (16%). 69% of those currently looking for work want to return on a part-time basis.⁴

Supporting this move, the Government is also providing assistance through the 50PLUS Champions in Jobcentres. Covering England, Scotland and Wales, they work alongside local employers to raise awareness about how recruitment policies can be adapted to cater to older workers.⁹

Need for Greater Employer Engagement

3 in 4 employers say they view older workers' experience as crucial to their organisation's success and more than half (54%) feel that an age-inclusive workforce would increase productivity.¹⁰

However, 39% of younger HR decision-makers admit that they are less likely to recruit people over the age of 50 and if employers did consider age in the recruitment process, it tended to be in favour of recruiting younger workers. Only 1 in 6 said they are very likely to introduce policies on age-inclusion in their workplace within the next year.¹⁰

A vast majority of older workers are open to training or reskilling, with 92% prepared to take a salary cut to learn a new skill. Despite employee willingness, only 35% of employers are prepared to retrain staff who are in their mid-50s or older.¹¹

One area of employer policies that is seeing improvement is menopause support in the workplace. Reflecting the increased media momentum, a report was published outlining Government policy, employer practice, and financial changes for women experiencing menopause in the workplace in November 2021.¹² More specifically, our Age at Work programme has tracked increased interest and progress among engaged employers with new menopause policies and initiatives.

⁸ Rest Less, "The Great Unretirement" – Older workers start to return to work in the midst of cost of living crisis," [Online]. Available: <https://restless.co.uk/press/the-great-unretirement-older-workers-start-to-return-to-work-in-the-midst-of-cost-of-living-crisis/>.

⁹ J. Tapper, "Boris Johnson's flagship jobs scheme was a failure, new figures reveal," [Online]. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/aug/20/boris-johnson-way-to-work-jobs-scheme-failure>.

¹⁰ Centre for Ageing Better, "Employer attitudes: Evidence cards," [Online]. Available: <https://ageing-better.org.uk/resources/employer-attitudes-evidence-cards>.

¹¹ CBI, "Labour shortages: how a focus on older workers can help," [Online]. Available: <https://www.cbi.org.uk/articles/labour-shortages-how-a-focus-on-older-workers-can-help/>.

¹² Department for Work & Pensions, "Policy paper Menopause and the Workplace: How to enable fulfilling working lives: government response Published 18 July 2022," [Online].

Measuring Impact

Since 2020, Bean Research has been working with Age at Work to design an impact framework and methodology to measure the effectiveness and impact of the on the lives of older people and employers across Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales and to provide a process of ongoing monitoring and evaluation. At the end of Year 4, a robust, simplified evaluation methodology, together with the overall impact framework continues to:

- Demonstrate change and social value for the programme collectively across the work of 6 teams, 3 countries, and 8 programmes – telling the story of the overarching ONE programme, while understanding the nuances of the individual programmes in different nations.
- Include key measures to allow measurement of Social Return on Investment (longer term) and impact on wellbeing and resilience – a key determinant of sustained employment.

Older People participating in the programme complete a survey pre-programme, immediately after completion of a programme (or set of modules) and six months afterwards, with the same questions asked of all participants across the nations. The pre-survey also captures registration and equality data, negating the need for a separate survey. Data included in this report is based on all responses to date, from all three surveys (1,482, 935 & 409, respondents respectively). For this end of Year 4 Annual Report, Bean Research has also conducted SROI analysis on the Still Ready for Work Programme, based on a focus group with SRFW participants in Northern Ireland, depth interviews with employers, an employer survey and detailed analysis of qualitative and quantitative data from the Older Person surveys.

For **Employers** in the programme, evaluation includes tracking reach, involvement in audits, matrices, and networks, and resulting changes in approach. The teams use the employer tracker to record the involvement of all their employers and annually, record **policies &**

Age at Work: Impact Framework



practices put into place in the organisations. In addition, pre and post involvement surveys have also been established as an optional tool to capture further information about employer participants.

Impact Framework: Agreed in late 2020, the Impact Framework clarifies the outputs, outcomes, and beneficiaries the evaluation will measure, to prove value to Older People, Employers and Wider Society.

Activity Review

Across the three nations and six organisations, the Age at Work programme has delivered a range of free initiatives, resources and tools to help businesses become more age inclusive, support more older workers to remain or return to work and raise awareness of the impact of an ageing workforce.

In the fourth year of the programme, notable developments in programmes for employers and older workers include:

- New, revised online Age-Inclusive Business Review platform, launched by BITC NI and Nigma. This facilitated easier completion of the business review in Northern Ireland and Wales and provides access to resources regarding age inclusiveness, toolkits, and videos.
- Post Covid, hybrid workplaces have become the norm. In response to this changing environment, Age at Work teams have moved to deliver a greater mix of online and in-person initiatives, with programmes reviewing and flexing to suit audiences. For example:
 - BITCNI noted that eLearning and online workshops/virtual placements were the preferred approach for businesses and workplaces and have built on their online offering.
 - For employees, a Digital Skills component to the SRFW Programme was added with success, as older workers now require a significantly digital approach to the job market.
 - On the other hand, Age NI returned to some in-person MCRs', as requested by MCR participants but also in response to working more closely with local Jobs and Benefits Offices (JBO's) to access more unemployed participants. As many JBO clients find it difficult to access online sessions, Age NI collaborated with BITC and a local JBO to deliver an 'In Person' AAW event for the JBO clients at their office.
 - BITC Scotland successfully delivered online SRFW workshops, crucially supported by the Coffee & Job Club', which provides regular in-person contact, reducing social isolation for those over 50 searching for work. It has also introduced breakout rooms for more tailored in-person 1to1 support at the Coffee & Job Club.
- "Cross Selling" MCR's via BITC, and pre-arranged MCR courses through employers, in addition to recruiting individuals. e.g. Age NI have bolstered their recruitment for MCRs through BITC NI clients, while "open MCRs" have been more difficult to recruit for.

Programmes Delivered for Older Workers

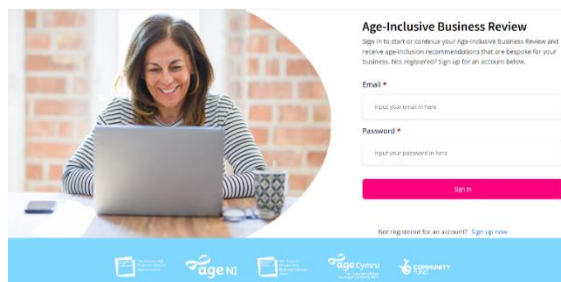
Mid Career Reviews are delivered by Age Northern Ireland and Age Cymru, primarily to support those in employment. Online workshops covered Financial Wellbeing, Health and Wellbeing, and Career Support.

In Northern Ireland, the **Still Ready For Work Programme** worked intensively with individuals on a 1:1 basis and delivered a modular series of topic workshops, including a digital skills module with plans to also collaborate with the MCR programme.

In Scotland, a multi-pronged approach has helped individuals return to work (or explore a role in a different business). The **Still Ready for Work Programme** delivered online workshops including Skills Assessment; Job Search in the Digital Age; Creating a Social Media Profile; CVs, Applications and Interview Skills. The Coffee & Job Club is an informal, drop-in style group which has reduced social isolation for those over 50 searching for work.

These two initiatives led to longer-term relationships with individuals, who were also supported with Practical Skills Workshops, events and face-to-face meetings. Importantly, through a programme of work placements with partner employers, such as Marks and Spencer this year, BITC Scotland has actively created opportunities for older workers to gain experience, receive a reference and interview for a role at the end of the placement.

Programmes Delivered for Employers



In Wales and Northern Ireland, the Age-Inclusive **Business Review** moved online and must now be completed by employers registering to take part in the learning network. The review identifies strengths, gaps and provides an age inclusion report for each business. The new online platform also gives access to a wide range of resources regarding age inclusiveness to employers, including toolkits, and videos.



The Toolkit continued to be used by employers and was made available as part of the online platform.

The Age-Inclusive Learning Network in both nations has brought professionals with an interest in age inclusion together online to share best practice, network and hear from topic expert speakers. This year it included the development and sharing of age actions plans, guest speakers from other businesses and multiple presentations on topics such as Menopause Awareness and Positive Ageing.

In Scotland, **The Age Inclusive Matrix** (AIM) offered practical advice and support to employers via 2 options. **AIM Getting Started**, an online survey and one-hour consultancy proved successful in engaging businesses onto the AIM programme. The **Age Inclusive Matrix - Into Action**, supported organisations to analyse all relevant areas to ensure that their age inclusivity. Through AIM work, Age Scotland recognised the need to provide support in specific areas and launched two new workshop initiatives **Age Inclusion for Managers** (100 events in January) and **Age Friendly Customer Services** workshops (15 in Q1). In addition, a support package for Tourism with SDS and BITC was developed.

Networking and leadership initiatives in the three nations have built relationships across organisations through discussion and sharing of experiences. In Scotland, **Age at Work Employers' Network** met throughout the year. In Wales the **Age Leadership Group** have met regularly, with Employers sharing age-inclusive changes they have implemented and group discussion supporting best practice.

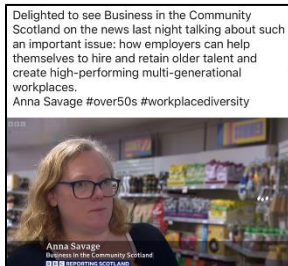
Creating Awareness and Ripple Effects

Teams have also been working to promote awareness of, and issues addressed by, the Age at Work Programme. Examples of the work done in Year 4 include:

BITC NI working with the Belfast City Council and the employability forum; Networking with up to 30 organisations in Q4 including Translink, Queens, UU and Housing Executive. Partnerships developed with a range of Jobs and Benefits Offices. Age NI also linked with JBO's and promoted MCR's with local councils and by collaborating with BITC to reach their clients.

This year, BITC Cymru commissioned research with Swansea University to understand the landscape for older workers in the workplace, the report was published, and insights shared with engaged businesses and other key organisations in Wales. Age Cymru liaised with the Welsh Government and Maps about planning for later life and their Mid Career Reviews are in their overall plan. Age Cymru and BITC Scotland participated in the Age Pioneers Group, a range of organisations across Europe which share information, keep informed and provide thoughts and views on age inclusion and older worker topics.

Age Scotland increased the number of presentations and networking opportunities they engaged in, as live events have returned. A keynote speech was delivered at EVH (Housing) Annual Conference and an Age at Work diversity day at the Culture Counts seminar. A collaborative programme, with BITC Scotland was launched with the Tourism sector of Skills Development Scotland (SDS), working with a variety of agencies to help them recruit and retain older workers. BITC Scotland built a strong partnership with DWP and other employability support organisations, attending job fairs aimed 50+, presenting to the 50+ work coaches and attending DWP team meetings.



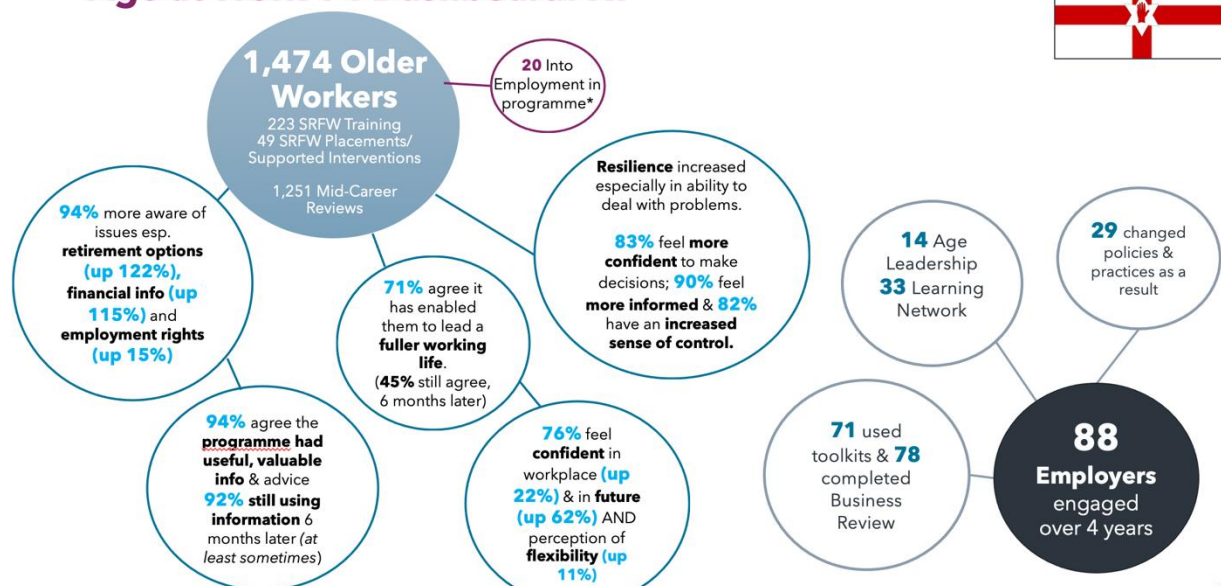
The BBC Scotland report featuring the Still Ready For Work success story for Waitrose, in April 2023, is an example of the PR and ripple effect arising from Age at Work's programme with individuals.

Northern Ireland: Summary of Impact

In Northern Ireland, **1,474** older workers and **88** employers have been engaged in the programme. Older workers have participated in the Still Ready for Work and Mid-Career programmes. In Year 4, 19 completed SRFW training, 15 had a work placement or specific intervention and 9 went into employment. NI has doubled the total number of older workers completing MCRs this year, with 614 completed. Positive feedback from participants confirms that Age at Work in Northern Ireland is effectively addressing relevant issues.

- **94%** are more aware of issues they should be considering as older workers. Specifically, awareness increased by **122%** around retirement options; by **115%** around sourcing financial information.
- **94%** found the programme to have useful and valuable information, and importantly, **92%** are still using this six months on.
- Resilience has also improved, with **83%** now more confident to make decisions about their future and **82%** reporting an increase in their sense of control and choice.
- In Northern Ireland, 88 Employers have been engaged, with 71 using the Age NI Toolkit, and 78 completing the Age-Inclusive Business Review.

Age at Work Y4 Dashboard: NI



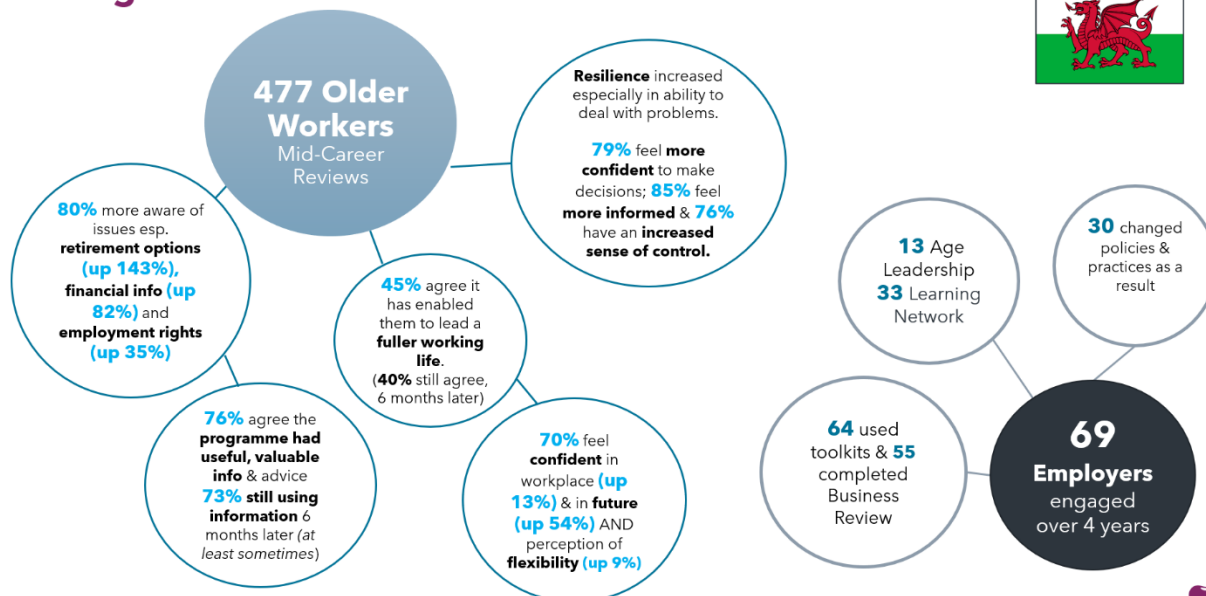
Older Person Data: May 2020 to 19th May 2023. Pre, Post & 6 Month Post Surveys. *Figure from Outcomes Reporting

Wales: Summary of Impact

In Wales, **477** older workers have participated in **Mid-Career Reviews** (83 in Year 4) and **69** Employers were engaged. The magnitude of positive shifts post-intervention, for people and businesses, is clearly evident.

- After completing a Mid-Career Review, **80%** were more aware of age-related issues to be considered. Specifically, there was an increase of **143%**, in participant's awareness of their retirement options, while the number who were aware of how to access financial information to help them plan for the future increased by **82%**. **1 in 3** feel better informed about their employment rights.
- **45%** agreed the programme had enabled them to lead a fuller working life, with **40%** still agreeing with this 6 months later. Moreover, levels of confidence to seek new employment rose by **35%**, while **13%** more employees feel confident in the workplace.
- Resilience in the ability to deal with problems had also grown, with **79%** feeling more confident to make decisions, **85%** feeling more informed to make decisions and **76%** feeling a greater sense of control.
- In Wales, **69** Employers have engaged with the programme, with **64** using the Age at Work Toolkits, and **55** completing the Age-Inclusive Business Review.

Age at Work Y4 Dashboard: Wales



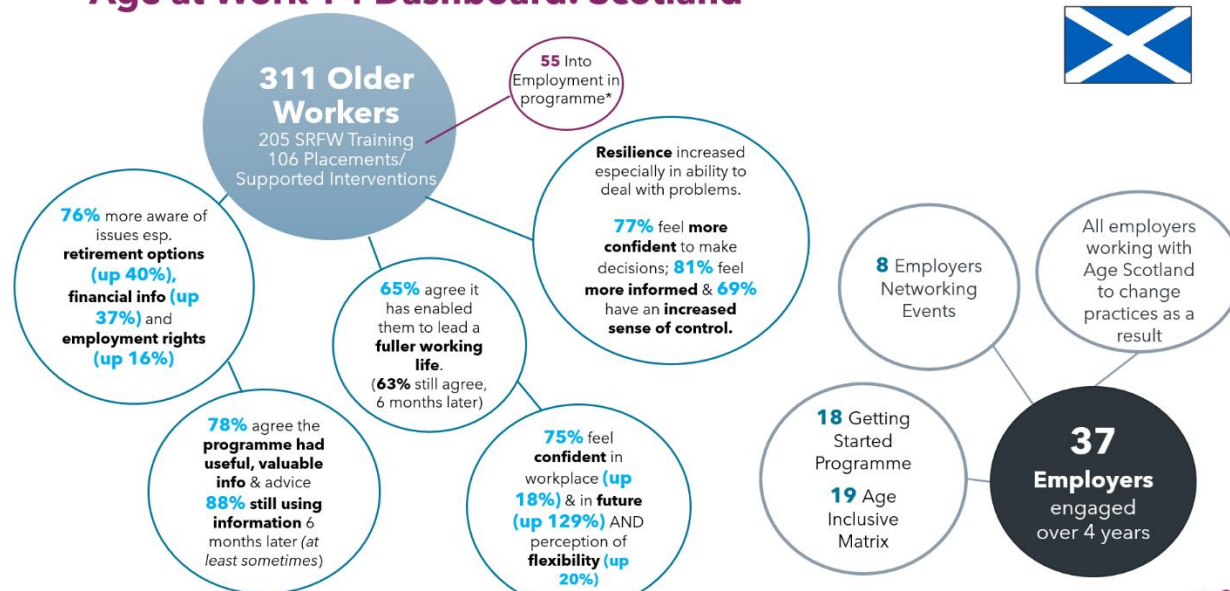
Older Person Data: May 2020 to 19th May 2023. Pre, Post & 6 Month Post Surveys

Scotland: Summary of Impact

In Scotland, Age at Work has engaged **311** older workers in Still Ready for Work. In year 4, 57 individuals were provided with SRFW training, 49 with placements or supported interventions and 20 were employed directly through the programme, in Year 4. **37** Employers have changed policies and practices in the workplace.

- **76%** of older workers reported an increased awareness of issues that they need to be considering.
- **65%** feel the SRFW programme has enabled them to live a fuller working life and 6 months later **63%** still agree.
- **88%** felt the programme was beneficial to them and **88%** were also still using the information and advice they had received 6 months later.
- Scotland Ready for Work has also increased the resilience of participants, with **77%** feeling more confident to make decisions and **69%** reporting an increased sense of control as a result.
- In Scotland, **37** Employers are engaged, 18 are on the AIMs Getting Started Programme, **19** have completed the Age Inclusive Matrix work.

Age at Work Y4 Dashboard: Scotland



Older Person Data: May 2020 to 19th May 2023. Pre, Post & 6 Month Post Surveys. *Figure from Outcomes Reporting

Age at Work Participants

2,156 older people have been supported through the Age at Work Programme over the past 4 years. A wide range of motivations are evident for taking part in an Age at Work Programme and research post-participation shows how those involved have had their needs met.

SRFW participants look for support in finding work, and to increase confidence and skills.

*What motivated you to participate in this programme?
Still Ready For Work Participants*

recently try find opportunities help find gaining employment completely change support
Redundancy feel retire learn pandemic programme try back work will job centre
forward career earn confidence paid years think employment
find new job help role need seeking job interest work
Recommended want find job looking returning skills advice
work coach coach interview retail experience told retirement place
job market pension gain change good used back little need help need update
move change career know unemployed

"The need for confidence and resilience in the present-day job market, and for new skills necessary, particularly for job-seeking and interviews."

"I'm hoping this programme will give me confidence and drive, to move to a new career."

"Re-assess my skills, update my knowledge to look for a job in a new challenging marketplace, gaining confidence and finding my new job"

"Simply to be informed on how to make a CV don't have a clue."

Feedback demonstrates how the programme has met these needs and in the next section, Impact on older workers, detailed outcomes will be described.

"It has given me the confidence to apply for any job, by adapting my CV and showing how my skills are transferable." SRFW Participant

Mid Career Review participants needed advice on retirement, future planning and pensions.

*What motivated you to participate in this programme?
Mid Career Review Participants*

learn Approaching retirement age considering options offered employer course given
turned employment possible job older informed planning future retire within next
support stage life Curiosity available partial retirement re Offered gain
Considering retirement Desire consider interested finding Will
early retirement Thinking retirement also
planning retirement etc financial knowledge future make
finances know pension currently advice time
thinking understand information Nearing retirement
Interested employer age change retirement
email work colleague need take looking seeking want
retirement age options current career useful planning well
retire role years reached Approaching retirement plan ahead
Preparing retirement financial planning retirement see prepare review
ensure approaching ideas help recently now work life balance good hear
financially so next years relevant find situation financial planning retire soon
Coming opportunities programmes

"Planning to retire in 6-7 years, so thinking ahead about financial planning"

"I am concerned about my pension/retirement and am experiencing menopausal challenges. This programme is accessible and came highly recommended by a colleague"

A further example of feedback on how the programme has delivered the right information and advice. In the next section, Impact on older workers, detailed outcomes will be described.

"Gives the kick start to commence planning for retirement with a wealth of info and opportunities to explore" MCR Participant

At the start of the programme, the large majority of all participants planned to be in or return to employment. **56%** stated an aim to remain in employment for the foreseeable future, **23%** planned to seek new employment or a new position, and **15%** wanted to return to work. 20% were looking for more flexible hours. However, **2 in 5** (42%) of the Age at Work Participants anticipated the transition to retirement soon.

The broad needs of older workers and the need for a multi-facilitated programme are clear. The Age at Work programme has addressed this through its variety of courses and interventions, catering both for those who are wanting to find a new job, Still Ready for Work, as well as those planning to remain in work or prepare for retirement (Mid Career Review). The value to businesses in supporting older workers is evident in that half the participants still intend to be working in 5 years' time. **51%** aim to work a further 1-5 years: **31%** 5-10 years and **18%** for more than 10 years.

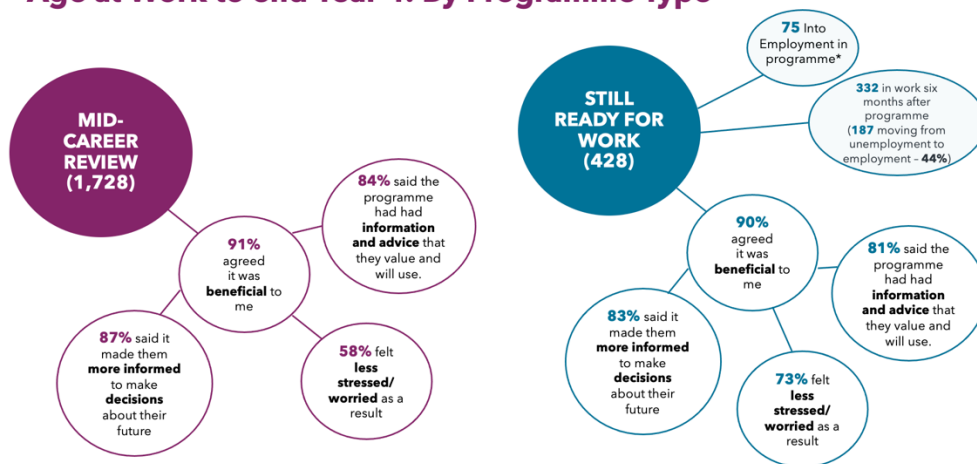
The overriding motive for continuing or returning to work was financial, with **87%** stating that the money to sustain a good quality of life was the most important factor in employment, and **63%** wanted to make additional pension contributions. 48% enjoyed the social side of work and 45% have skills they want to use. Almost a third recognise that their health is better when they are employed.

Impact on older workers

Both programmes have been beneficial to participants, providing awareness, information and advice, improving their ability to make informed decisions and decreasing stress and worry.

Overall, **91%** felt the programme they participated in had been 'beneficial to me,' with **86%** reporting that it, 'made me feel more informed to make decisions about my future.' **83%** felt they now 'had information and advice that I will value and will use,' and **94%** would be likely to recommend the programme to others. The Still Ready for Work programme in particular has contributed to decreased stress. All these measures have **increased** since the end of Year 3.

Age at Work to end Year 4: By Programme Type



5
Older Person Data: May 2020 to 19th May 2023. Pre, Post & 6 Month Post Surveys. *Figure from Outcomes Reporting

According to the agreed Age at Work Impact Framework, the three main behavioural and attitudinal outcomes for assessing the impact made by the Age at Work programmes are:

- increased confidence
- awareness of options and
- reduced isolation and loneliness.

These indicators have been tracked before and after programmes and the improvements in older people’s behaviour and attitudes are shown in the table below. There continues to be a clear achievement of outcomes that is different for each of the programmes. The impact of the Mid-Career Reviews has been on awareness of pertinent issues as well as greater knowledge of age-related concerns. For the Still Ready for Work programme participants, there is an increase in confidence in the work environment and in the ability to seek and gain new employment, should they so wish. Furthermore, the positive impact of the programme on employment status is demonstrated for the Still Ready for Work Programme, with employment up **129%** for older people, 6 months after their participation.

Key Outcomes Measures



	TOTAL	Northern Ireland	Wales	Scotland	Still Ready for Work	Mid-Career Review
CONFIDENCE						
More confident to make decisions about my future	79%	83%	68%	77%	79%	80%
Increased my sense of choice and control	77%	82%	64%	69%	74%	78%
I have the confidence to seek and gain new employment, should I so wish*	↑74%	↑75%	↑35%	↑117%	↑132%	↑16%
I feel confident in my future (at work)*	↑66%	↑62%	↑58%	↑129%	↑129%	↑65%
AWARENESS OF OPTIONS						
More aware of the issues I should be considering at my age	90%	94%	80%	76%	77%	92%
I am aware of my employment rights*	↑17%	↑15%	↑35%	↑32%	↑12%	↑18%
I am aware of my retirement options*	↑120%	↑122%	↑143%	↑40%	↑21%	↑124%
I have access to information to increase my financial awareness/stability*	↑105%	↑115%	↑82%	↑37%	↑20%	↑107%

*Percentage change pre to post.

Confidence

As a result of participating in the Age at Work Programme, Older People’s confidence levels have increased. 79% are more confident about making decisions about the future and 77% felt a greater sense of choice and control. For those on the SRFW programme, confidence in the workplace rose by 79% pre to post-intervention. Overall, the number of older people with the confidence to look for new work (should they wish to) rose by 90%, and for those on the Still Ready for Work programmes, this confidence to gain new employment was up 132% after their participation.

"I'm feeling much more informed and more confident about going forward into retirement." (Female, NI, MCR)

"Given me confidence in returning to work for the next decade or so." (Male, Scotland, SRFW)

"Excellent for my knowledge and confidence in employment" (6 months later, MCR, NI)

Knowledge and Awareness

Overall, **90%** reported increased awareness of age-related issues to be considered. This was particularly evident in Northern Ireland (**94%**) and among those completing a Mid-Career Review (**92%**). Awareness of retirement options increased by **120%**, strongest in Wales, up **143%** and among those completing a Mid-career Review, up **124%**. Access to useful financial information to increase financial stability was up by **105%**, strongest in Northern Ireland (**+115%**) and among those completing a Mid-career Review (**+107%**).

"An informative and necessary session with knowledgeable people" (Male, NI, MCR)

"It has provided me with information that leaves me in a better position to positively shape my current and future stages of life." (Male, NI, MCR)

"It made me lift my head up and look around and realise (there are) other important issues than just how to deliver the next project" (Female, Wales, MCR, 6 months later)

"Provided an opportunity to assess my current position in light of life changes and how to get more out of the work environment." (Male, MCR, NI, 6 months later)

Reduced Isolation & Loneliness

Owing to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, it is difficult to get an accurate assessment of this measure. There is an increase over the year in the number of people "feeling close to other people". In the pre-programme survey, **86%** claimed to feel 'close to other people,' at least some of the time, which is a huge change from the same measure a year prior, 55%, at the end of Year 3.

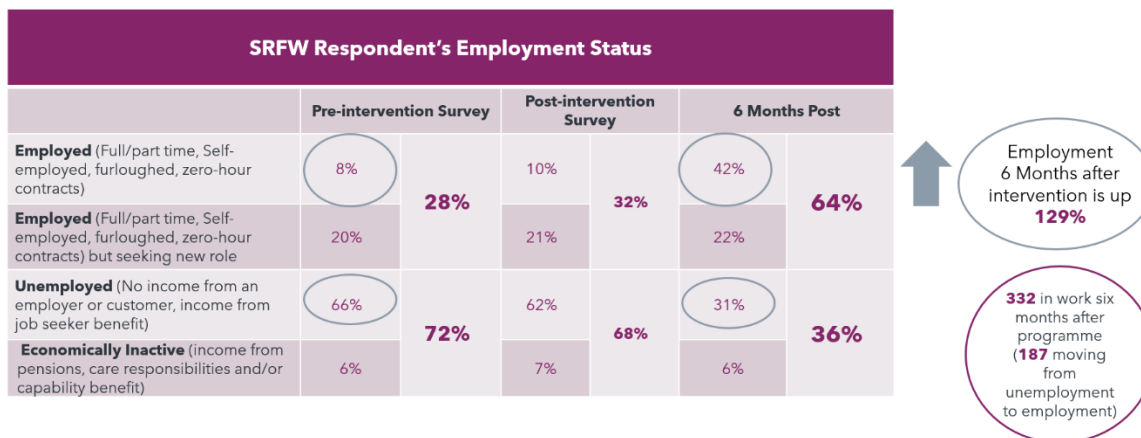
In the 6-month post-survey at the end of Year 4, **83%** feel closer to others, again a huge increase on the **56%** of Year 3 but slightly lower than the pre-measure of 86%. We would expect to measure a decrease in isolation post programmes, but in the context of pre and post-Covid environments having a huge impact on the changes in this measure, we would not be able to use this as a clear indicator of the impact of the programme on its own. While Covid-19 impact is skewing measures of programme impact in this area, there is anecdotal evidence that interventions like the Job & Coffee club are achieving their goal of reducing isolation and post-programme comments from MCR attendees show that as a result of participating in the courses, people feel less alone in their worries.

*"Good to have a forum where I'm not alone in my worries"
"I wasn't alone and there is great knowledgeable support out there"
"I am not alone"
(MCR Participants)*

Employment Status, Still Ready for Work

The key outcome for Still Ready for Work Participants is employment within 6 months. The programme continues to deliver against this objective and the measures show increases on last year. While the delivery team note that 75 individuals through the SRFW are known to have gone into employment directly, and can be fully attributed to the programme, our survey gives the self-reported figure 6 months later. 322 in work 6 months later, 187 moving from unemployment to employment.

Age at Work to May 2023: Change in Employment Status Still Ready for Work Programme



¹⁰ Older Person Data: May 2020 to 19th May 2023. Pre, Post & 6 Month Post Surveys – SRFW Participants only



At the end of Year 4, participants in the Still Ready for Work Programme showed a **129% increase in employment** in the 6 months after taking part in the programme. This significant increase in employment, from **28%** pre-programme, to **64%** 6-months later, evidences the difference made by the programme to older workers. Along with increased employment, there was a correlating drop from **72%** to **36%** unemployed. This means that 332 are in employment six months later, 187 of those have moved from unemployment to employment.

6 months after completing the SFRW programme, participants from Northern Ireland and Scotland shared how their working lives had changed, as a result.

"Positive, supportive, inspiring and far exceeding the government job centre support, particularly the lack of job coach support, My coach hadn't heard of this programme, I made him aware of it. The support I received from Age at Work programme was fantastic, it's changed and improved my life and in return, I can now financially help my three precious children. Thank you so much."

"It gave me great confidence and new C.V for applying for, and getting, my new job"

"It gave me confidence in my abilities which in turn helped me find a new job."

"The additional digital job search skills and interview skills training was a vital part of securing my new role."

"Helped me to define and present my key skills in my CV to get interviews and secured my new job!"



In Scotland, the partnership with Marks and Spencer resulted in the offer of 18 placements in the Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen stores. The face-to-face placements proved successful. 13 people attended two weeks of online training, 12 finished the placements, and 8 were employed by Marks and Spencer as a result.



In Northern Ireland, intensive, 1 on 1 coaching in the SRFW programme has also led directly to employment. In Q1 BITC Ni worked with Triangle Housing Association to enrol in the Still Ready for Work Programme. **5** went on to get 1-1 support and at least **3** went on to employment. In Q2, another **6** participants benefitted from 1-1 coaching and **all** moved into employment as a result.

In a **focus group** run by Bean Research, 5 Still Ready For Work participants in Northern Ireland shared glowing feedback. They all spoke about the positive impact of the SRFW coaching they had received to update their CV's, to understand and optimize the application process and to prepare for job interviews.

Key benefits and outcomes from the Still Ready for Work programme included:

- the programme increased knowledge of the current CV requirements and practical process of application in the digital world (many older workers, particularly those in long-term jobs didn't have a CV, and were unaware of digital changes to the recruitment environment and the significant changes in CV, application and interview requirements).
- interview techniques and 1on1 interview practice significantly changed the outcome of interviews for those who had started a job search.
- confidence and self-esteem, which for many had taken a dip due to redundancy, unsuccessful job applications or interviews, increased as a result of the programme.
- the Still Ready for Work programme not only provided tools and guidance but gave participants the motivation to move forward and engage with the process. This mentorship through the individuals employment journey was viewed as invaluable.

As a direct result of these changes, participants who were actively going through a job search process secured interviews, progressed through, and were offered jobs.

Together, these figures, feedback and qualitative research show the positive impact the Age at Work programmes have had on the working lives of older people, in addition to the behavioural and attitudinal changes they institute.

Impact on Employers

Challenges remain in engaging employers in the post Covid-19 environment, with multiple demands on the time of HR and DEI professionals making it difficult for them to prioritise time for age inclusion issues. Teams report that organisations are particularly focused on immediate responses to the cost-of-living crisis and the changing nature of work. As employees return to the office environment, issues around hybrid working have increased the workload for HR teams over the past 6 months.

However, while it has been difficult to recruit new employers onto the programme, the age agenda remains extremely relevant, as the impact of these 2 challenges affects older workers disproportionately and the interest in age inclusion remains high with recruitment challenges, retention challenges and equalities awareness all driving activity. For example, with the focus on the current state of people's finances, employers have been well reminded that they also need to support over 50's into the future.

Across all nations, a cumulative total of **194** Employers have engaged with the programmes over the past four years. Of these **135** have used the toolkits and **152** completed Age-Inclusive Business Reviews or the Age Inclusive Matrix. A total of **66** are now part of the Learning Network and **27** are engaged in Age Leadership Groups.

As a result, almost half of all Employers, **96 (49%)** have changed policies and practices to make their organisations more attractive to older workers. These initiatives include introducing menopause policies, more flexible working policies, along with financial and wellbeing policies.

Value of Age at Work to Organisations: Qualitative and Quantitative Research

At the beginning of 2023 Bean Research conducted 6 **Depth Interviews with Employers** about their involvement with Age at Work and the benefit to their businesses.



Martina Donaghy: HR Centre Of Expertise Business Audit Completed, Toolkit Action Plan completed, Attended Event, Learning Network



Sarah King: Human Resources Director MCR; Business Audit Completed, Toolkit, Learning Network Participant, Age Action Plan completed



Beverly Counsell: HR Advisor at Target Group Business Audit Completed, Toolkit, MCR, Age Action Plan completed, Attended Event



Shaun McCahill: Head of HR and Organisational Development Age Inclusive Matrix



Andrew Loughran: Learning and Development MCRs: Financial Wellbeing



Jane Carr: Human Resources Manager Business Audit, Action Plan Completed, Advisory Leadership Team, Toolkit

"It was a gift" Martina Donaghy, HR Centre of Expertise, Allstate

"The feedback [from the MCR Financial Wellbeing] is like no other I have seen. We have done 450 in the last year; we started this year with 200 more interested in taking part and we still have 200 on the waiting list. We're not advertising the course, this is just spreading by word of mouth. The feedback is fantastic from people I wouldn't normally hear from and very senior civil servants want more of these programmes. It is an untapped resource. The 450 we have done has just scratched the surface" Andrew Loughran: Learning and Development, NICS

Discussion and feedback was universally positive and the following themes emerged on the **value** the Age at Work programme has delivered to their organisations.

1. Provided organisations with framework and capacity to address age inclusivity within their businesses.

- The Business Review or Audit provide structure to evaluate the organisations' current position.
- The process effectively identifies gaps in business policies and the current offering.
- By joining the Age at Work Programme, professionals are able to specifically earmark time and dedicate capacity to address Age Inclusivity as a priority.
- The expertise of the Age at Work team and the tools they provide, optimises the use of businesses' limited time and resources.
- The Age at Work programme has been a catalyst for actionable change, by providing pathways and impetus to change policies.

2. Provided leading expertise and experience in the Age at Work agenda.

- Consultations and training from Age at Work team members provide external experts, who not only have the knowledge and experience but can bring an outside viewpoint into a business.
- Trainers provided for the Learning Network and MCR workshops are experts in their areas and share their experience of working with many organisations and individuals (at no cost to the business participants).
- The Age at Work team is versed in industry and global standards relating to age inclusivity, this has helped businesses to benchmark and target their own age agendas.

3. Enabled organisations to develop valuable networks.

- Age at Work has connected businesses with other organisations to share experiences and best practices.
- Through the programme, HR professionals have been exposed to new ideas and approaches to address age inclusivity in their own organisations.
- The programme has introduced businesses to expert trainers, whom they would access independently for other training needs.

4. Changed businesses' awareness and approach to Age Inclusion.

- Conversation, courses and policy changes have increased the engagement of employees and the feeling of inclusion, for older workers in businesses.
- Businesses saw an increased awareness of how the loss of skills and expertise will impact the business if older workers are not retained.
- As a result of their participation, businesses have started to tailor communications, both internally and externally to attract and retain older workers.
- Employers talked about their participation and subsequent actions as sending a clear message to talent and acquisition teams on their value of older workers.

5. Older Employees feel more valued.

- Participation in Mid Career Reviews boosted employees. The courses were interesting, relevant and useful to individuals and therefore a valuable offer from Employers.
- Age at Work programmes for individuals have encouraged them to have further informed conversations with HR or Pensions teams, facilitating their roles at work.
- Businesses showing interest and investment in Age Inclusion issues have made Older Employees feel valued as part of the organisation.

6. Value for Money

The Age at Work Programme is offered free to employers and is recognised as being valuable. The following give some examples of the costs Employers feel they have "saved".

- 6 x hour business consultation sessions (provided by BITC Scotland)
- Northern Ireland Civil Service could specifically value the MCR's. NCIS had been looking to tender (and pay for) the training but found Age at Work with a programme offer that delivered exactly what they were looking for. At the time of the interview, 450 NICS employees had attended 21 MCR Finance Workshops. Andrew Loughran estimated that it saved NICS £8k-£12k, the cost of courses to be delivered privately.
- In addition to cost, some employers had no capacity to deliver the equivalent of the Mid Career Review course independently.

In addition to talking to Employees, data has also been collected from The **Post Employer Support Survey** (an optional evaluation tool). It was completed by 8 organisations that had completed Age Inclusive Business Review or Matrix (AIM) and provides additional insight into the success of the audit process. Organisations have gained:

- Increased awareness of how they can proactively support older employees
- Increased awareness of gaps in provision
- Help in creating new age-inclusive initiatives

Positive feedback from Employers illustrates the impact of the programme on businesses from generating awareness and ideas, to taking positive action:

"The programme has raised awareness ...and given staff a voice ... Through workshops we have been listing & taking suggestions to CMT and retirement and carer policies are being created. The suggestion of an induction buddy to assist younger staff was rolled out to all new staff & was extremely successful."

"It's been really good to have support & advice from experts. We had lots of good ideas but this feedback & finesse has helped us to come up with an action plan."

"This helped us create a structured set of goals to ensure we raised awareness, educated both our managers and employees, removed obstacles including stereotype perceptions due to age."

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, a cumulative total of **88** Employers have engaged with the programmes. Of these **71** have used the toolkits and **78** have completed Age-Inclusive Business Reviews. A total of **33** are now part of the Learning Network and **14** are engaged in the Age Leadership Group.

As a result, **29** have changed policies and practices to make their organisations more attractive to older workers.



BITC NI has worked with Allstate NI since 2021, as a result of their involvement in the Age at Work programme they made multiple changes to their policies and procedures, including introducing a Reverse Mentoring programme between its employees over 50 and the graduate program. In March 2023, Allstate NI became the first company in UK & Ireland to earn Gold Diversity Mark, the top distinction for an inclusive and diverse workplace. One of its key diversity and inclusion achievements was *"Equal opportunity for progression and mobility regardless of age, with employees ranging from ages 18 to 70. Commitment to the 5 Actions to be an Age-Friendly Employer standard, to protect and support its multigenerational workforce."*

Health & Wellbeing, Menopause, and Flexible Working policies have been changed this year in organisations across Northern Ireland, as a result of their participation in the Learning Network and the wider Age at Work programme of events, support and advice.



Wales

In Wales, a cumulative total of **69** Employers have engaged with the programmes. Of these **64** have used the toolkits and **55** completed the Age-Inclusive Business Review. A total of **33** are now part of the Learning Network and **13** have been engaged in the Age Leadership Group. As a result, **30** Employers have changed policies and practices to make their organisations more attractive to older workers.



Cardiff & Vale College has worked with BITC Wales since 2022, completing the Age-Inclusive Business Review, using the Toolkit and engaging in the Learning Network. Since their involvement with the Age at Work Programme Cardiff & Vale College has developed a Menopause Policy, started a Menopause Employee Group in Sept 2022 and completed menopause training for staff. They are also investing in their Mental Health programme with MH First Aid Training and the promotion of Mental Health champions. They will be launching their new Financial Wellbeing policy in Autumn 2023.



Coleg Gwent engaged with the Age at Work programme in October 2022, completing the Age-Inclusive Business Review, using the Toolkit and engaging in the Learning Network. As a result, they are reviewing all policies and will add Financial Wellbeing to their Health and Wellbeing strategy by the end of 2023. In January, the College launched its "overall inclusive language toolkit" The HR department has piloted Mid-Career Reviews with some staff and aims to roll out later this year.

Scotland

In Scotland, a cumulative total of 37 Employers have engaged with the programmes over the past three years. Of these 18 have engaged in the AIM Getting Started programme and 19 have completed the Age Inclusive Matrix. 8 have attended networking events. All of these employers are working with Age Scotland to change policies and practices to ensure their organisations are attractive to and supportive of older workers.

Impact on Society

Based on the data collated, Bean Research has conducted a Social Return on Investment analysis to understand the social value of the programme. See the 'Measuring Impact' section for detail. Social Return on Investment measurement is a relatively complex process, but one which has clear steps defined by NEF in 2010, and in this instance was conducted based on the eight principles defined by Social Value UK. One of these is transparency, and therefore this stage of the report is purposely detailed, to allow robust analysis of our evaluation and calculations.

The first part of the SROI process is conducting a Theory of Change process and designing an Impact Framework which was completed in 2020 and is detailed in the 'Measuring Impact' section. Given this process identifies outcomes and impacts, key indicators that demonstrated success were then developed, and Bean Research has been working with the Age at Work teams over the last four years to ensure that these are collected in a systematic and robust way.

SROI analysis means that a financial value to society is placed on the impact you have – mostly in terms of increasing employment, increased knowledge & practical support and increased confidence – as well as cost savings to employers. These impact values are then divided by the **input** – the cost of running the programmes. While the grant from National Lottery Community Fund was £2,244,944 for 5 years, we have based the cost on the money spent by the end of year 4 (31 April 2023) which is £1,560,120.

In total, over the last four years, we found that the Age at Work programme has generated **£6.6million** in benefits to society.

We, therefore, estimate that for every **£1** spent on the Age at Work programme, approximately **£4.25** of social value is generated (over three years) through economic benefits and avoided spending for employers, and the gains for participants through increased confidence in the future, practical guidance and employment outcomes.

While there is a set process for calculating SROI there are several assumptions (of drop-off, attribution, displacement and deadweight) that are made through the analysis, and these are summarized below. Not all assumptions can be included in this report, but Bean Research would be happy to share more detail.

Deadweight is a measure of the amount of the outcome which would have happened without the Age at Work programme.

Displacement means whether outcomes have simply been displaced, or moved, to somewhere else. We have not accounted for displaced outcomes caused by Age at Work programme for most of the outcomes identified and assumed that participation in the programme was not preventing others with similar issues from experiencing positive outcomes. However, we have followed advice such as that from DWP which suggests only 20% of jobs created through job-matching are 'additional'.

Attribution is the extent that can be attributed to the Age at Work programme. For employer value, where a service is provided, no other party will have attributed to that change.

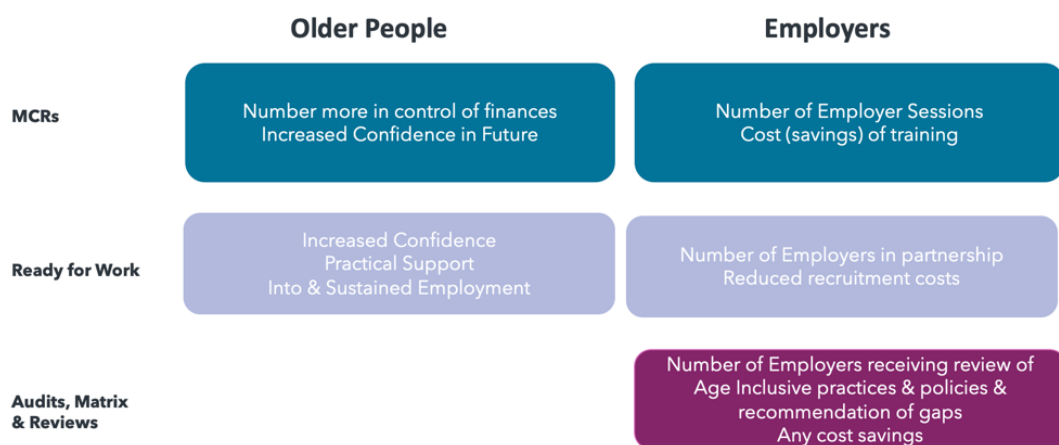
Attribution differs more in relationship to employment gained as a result of the Age at work programme – and in that instance, attribution differs as to whether the sustained employment is reported by the Age at Work team or self-reported by participants.

Drop-off is the effect after the programme. We have based our analysis on data immediately after the programme, and six months later – based on feedback from surveys after that time.

Double counting: given the type of impacts identified it is possible to ‘double count’ when you aggregate the value of impacts as each impact is estimated independently of others. The most likely instance of double counting relates to the benefits of training for those participants who report both practical, knowledge-based support (such as CV writing or financial education) alongside increased confidence in the future.

It should be noted that this calculation is based on an input figure of £1,795,955 which is 4 years of the 5-year funding from the National Lottery Community Fund. The total funding is £2,244,944, on which the final SROI calculation will be based.

The SROI calculation is based on three programmes within Age at Work, from which the key indicators and financial proxies used to determine value are detailed.



1. Mid-Career Reviews

Value to Individuals: Increased Awareness of Options

Awareness of the options available to participants significantly increases through participation in Mid-Career reviews. In fact, 90% report being more aware of issues especially retirement options (up 120% between pre & post measures), financial information (up 105%) and employment rights (up 17%). In terms of attribution, the vast majority of those (83%) feel the programme had useful, valuable info & advice. Our research among MCR participants showed that 87% are still using the information gained 6 months later. To that end, we can conclude that 1,503 increased knowledge of retirement options and financial literacy for retirement.

The Financial Conduct Authority research agrees that pre-retirement financial information and advice can play a constructive role in helping older workers plan for retirement. Academic

research¹³ reinforces this by showing that workplace financial education increases the likelihood and amount of retirement savings (Kaiser et al., 2021). And in the UK, this is really needed. 43% of British older workers said they are only vaguely or not at all aware of what their finances will be once they retire¹⁴, while a third of British pensioners¹⁵ only have the State pension to rely upon, with no additional sources of wealth or income.

The value placed on financial education and retirement options is based on the average cost of an hour of financial advice. While the Mid-career reviews are conducted over at least three hours (and up to three half days sessions), we feel both the insights gained (& the extent to which information is retained and used 6 months later), the advice received is equivalent to *at least* an hour's one-to-one financial advice. According to Which? consumers can expect to pay anything between £30 to £250 an hour for one-to-one advice with a qualified financial adviser, but they conclude that the average cost in 2023 is £196 per hour (based on information provided by Which? in May 2023).

Given the activity and the corresponding response via surveys immediately after involvement in the reviews, as well as six months later, we have concluded that only 10% of attribution would be due to other partners but that there would be a 20% drop off each year.

Value to Individuals: Increased Confidence

MCR participants report an increase in their well-being and confidence in the future. Given the level of participation, particularly in comparison to those involved in the ready for work programme, we have included those who increased self-reported their increased confidence through the survey – 1,226 MCR participants.

Recognising that the self reported increasing confidence is likely to have happened without the activity, the deadweight is set to 75% and the attribution is estimated to be 30%. In other words, this is a consistent measure shown across four years of the programme, but a conservative approach to increased confidence in the future has been calculated.

MCR: Value to Employers: Employer Sessions & Cost Savings of Training

As part of the MCR programme of sessions, Northern Ireland and Wales have worked with organisations to deliver bespoke MCR Workshops for their employees. This has been in addition to the "Open" MCR Workshops, to which any individuals can be signposted or recruited. At least **38** different businesses have used Age at Work to deliver at least **98** individual MCR sessions to their employees.

In an unprompted valuation of these MCR sessions, the in-depth interview with Andrew Loughran (Learning and Development Director for the Northern Ireland Civil Service) revealed that he had calculated the value of the 21 MCR workshops delivered to 450 employees to be between £8,000 and £12,000, if they had been delivered privately. Taking a midpoint for this valuation of £10,000 for 21 workshops, we have calculated the market cost of a similar workshop, in the workplace environment, for a group of professionals to be £476.19 per workshop.

2. Still Ready For Work

¹³ Goyal, K. and Kumar, S., 2021. Financial literacy: A systematic review and bibliometric analysis. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(1), pp.80-105.

¹⁴ FCA's Financial Lives Survey, 2020

¹⁵ Aviva and Deloitte. (2016). *Mind the Gap*.

Value to Individuals: Increased Confidence in the Future

Perhaps the most consistent outcome for participants in the Ready for Work programme is increased confidence in the future and wellbeing. In the in-depth interviews among participants in Northern Ireland and feedback from the drop-in chat in Scotland participants, this is expressed in terms of:

'I now feel confident that my skills are useful in another sector',

'Redundancy when you're over 50 is hard. Being part of this group has made me realise I am not alone and together we can navigate job applications and interviews'.

'Julie helped me prepare for the job interview when I was getting nervous on a Sunday. She conducted a mock interview to help me build my confidence so that when I had the actual interview, I was ready with questions and responses. I would not have had the confidence to ask for the flexibility in the role that I needed, if it wasn't for feeling more confidence.'

(SRFW NI Respondents)

"After my placement, I was offered a role, so I now have a contract for 16 hours a week. I am now much happier. I have had friends and family tell me I am happier and more content – I feel useful again" SRFW. Marks & Spender Placement, Scotland

In the quantitative survey, across the 4 years, increased confidence is the most consistent measure. In particular, 79% feel more confident to make decisions and 71% feel confident in future (up 66%). Applying the Social Value Bank increased confidence financial proxy of £9,283, our conclusion is that while 405 people have more confidence in future, we have only included the 376 whose confidence increased between the beginning and the end of the programme.

Value to Individuals: Practical Support

77% of Still Ready for Work participants feel that they are more aware of the issues they should be considering at their age. In both the verbatim comments collected as part of the quantitative research and through the in-depth interviews, the practical tools and help provided through the Ready for Work programme (whether informally through Job & Coffee Club in Scotland or more formally through one-to-one coaching) are regularly mentioned. Participants spoke particularly about the support they had in writing current and relevant CV's.

"The Still Ready for Work course helped – using certain words with CV's, the specific type of knowledge that came from this was terrific. I have written it all down."

"It was so much information and so many good things to think about including rejigging my applications to jobs. I think the main thing was that it gave me my confidence back"

SRFW, Scotland

To understand the value of these practical resources, Bean Research undertook a review of professional CV writing services available online. While some one-to-one services charge up to £750, online CV services range are more likely to be £99 – £200. In the UK, we looked at the two most used services – TopCV.co.uk and CVPeopleUK.co.uk. Topcv.co.uk provides an 'expertly written and keyword optimised CV' for £99. Adding a cover letter increases that to £129, and a LinkedIn makeover increases the cost to a total of £219. A similar organisation is CVpeopleUK.co.uk, which offers a mid-management CV written with a cover letter for £289 or for established careers and general workers the cost is £235. The latter costs include a one-hour consultation.

This is comparable, given participants in the Still Ready for Work programme focused on the development of the CV with keywords to allow applications to pass through the applicant tracking systems and that Julie in Northern Ireland and Anna in Scotland help participants with cover letters and LinkedIn profiles. While we know from the in-depth feedback that the Age at Work programme provides a much more tailored approach, we have attributed a value halfway between the two services mentioned above of £227. All participants in the Still Ready for Work programme have had support with their CVs. Therefore we have taken the 428 people through the program over the four years as the number receiving this.

In Northern Ireland, an external consultant from Graffiti Recruitment delivers the SRFW workshops and 1-1 coaching through the job search process for the Still Ready for Work participants. Julie would charge the support she provides on an hourly rate, £100 per workshop and £50ph for 1-1s, £250 for a half-day session, and £500 for the full day. We therefore feel that the values attributed above are a very conservative estimate given the hours of support those working with Julie have attested to.

Value to Individuals: Increased and Sustained Employment

The ultimate aim of the Still Ready for Work programme is to support older workers into work. However, in developing the impact framework for this programme, we were conscious that 'into employment' data often hides the cycle of in and out of employment that those with the highest barriers to work have difficulty escaping.

To enable social mobility, or to escape the 'last in, first out' redundancy cycle for older workers, people need to be in 'decent work' – usually guaranteed, permanent employment. This is particularly true for those with caring responsibilities (higher among older workers) as Carers tend to enter jobs at the same rate as the average but leave employment at about twice the rate.

To that end, we have used DWP's definition of sustained employment.

We have two pieces of data which determine the employment figure. There are 75 people who have gained employment as a direct result of the Still Ready for Work scheme, as monitored by Age at Work delivery teams. However, our 6 months later survey among participants shows that 187 are in sustained employment. We have therefore taken 187 as our 'into employment' total, but adjusted attribution dependent on whether these jobs were directly brokered by the Still Ready for Work team or not. We have based the financial value to the individual moving into work on the National TOMs Framework value of £18,965 for employment of someone who has been unemployed for over a year (NT3).

SRFW Value to Employer: Cost of Recruitment Saved

While 187 Ready for Work participants moved into employment within six months of the programme, some were provided with work placements through an employer partnership model. Age at Work partnered with Triangle, Waitrose and Marks & Spencer to provide over 30 job placements, resulting in 13 permanent positions. As well as the value to the individual, and the reduced state burden of someone moving into work, the Still Ready for Work program, in this case reduced the cost of recruitment.

The cost per hire figure in the UK, according to GlassdoorHR resources, is £3,000 with it taking on average, 27.5 days of employers' time to recruit. It is not just the cost but the fact that is incredibly difficult to fill positions in the retail sector at the moment. While in January 2023 the British Retail Consortium announced a fall in the UK retail vacancy rate, it was still 13.8%. This was announced alongside details of increasing store closure due to high vacancies. The

Age at Work programme not only provided suitable candidates with relevant experience but provided - through the partnership - the ability to trial candidates through job placements. To this end, we feel the average cost per hire figure is valid for the 13 people that secured sustained employment through these partnerships.

3. Audits & Matrix:

Value to Employer: Reviews leading to change in policy or practice.

A key part of the age of work programme is the offer to employers, not just to provide Mid Career Reviews for or recruit older workers, but also to review their approach to inclusive workplaces. The review undertaken provides a matrix, audit, or toolkit, depending on the nation, in which the employer operates, and provides a gap analysis of current practice against suggested, or best practice approaches.

Across all nations, a cumulative total of **194** Employers have engaged with the programmes over the past four years. Of these **135** have used the toolkits and **152** completed Age-Inclusive Business Reviews or the Age-Inclusive Matrix. As a result, almost half of all Employers, **96 (49%)** have changed policies and practices to make their organisations more attractive to older workers. These initiatives include introducing menopause policies, more flexible working policies, along with financial and well-being policies.

Feedback has shown how valuable this process, and the subsequent gap analysis is, alongside guidance about how to increase their approach to age inclusivity. This is reinforced by 100% of employers saying they are now aware of how to create an age-inclusive work environment and the support they have received has generated ideas to create age-friendly initiatives.

While employers suggest that the cost of having a review conducted by an age and workplace specialist would be £4,000 -£12,000 (without the support to change those policies and practices), it should be noted that the offer to employers to conduct this review with no cost attached could have (and is likely to have) attracted more employers than would have paid for expert review. For the purposes of this report, the mid figure (£8,000) has been selected.

To be cautious, Bean Research has concluded that we include cost savings from the review among only those who have changed policies or practices. We have set a displacement value at 50%, given the increasing emphasis placed on menopause programmes (for example) over the last few years - due in part to the work conducted by the Age at Work programme.

Sensitivity Testing

To understand how sensitive our results are to some of the assumptions we have made; we tested them by changing either the attribution, deadweight or drop-off rates. We then calculated the percentage change of the revised SROI to the ratio achieved with our original assumptions. Note the attribution value is the % allocated to the contributions of other actors.

This analysis shows us the influence of the assumptions made and tests the robustness of the indicators used. In fact, the sensitivity analysis reveals that the social return on investment could differ between 62p for every £1 invested, depending on the assumptions made. The conclusion therefore is that for every £1 invested in the tri-nation Age at Work programme, a social return of between £3.94 and £4.56 is delivered, over three years.

Impact Mid Career Reviews	Base value	Alternative variable	Revised SROI
Increased Awareness of Options			
Attribution	10%	20%	3.99
Drop-off	20%	30%	3.97
Drop-off	20%	10%	4.08
Increased Confidence			
Drop-off	50%	40%	4.19
Deadweight	75%	60%	4.35
Deadweight	75%	80%	3.91
Attribution	50%	60%	3.91
Attribution	50%	40%	4.05
Cost Savings To Employers			
Displacement	20%	30%	4.01
Displacement	20%	10%	4.03
Attribution	0%	5%	4.01

Impact Still Ready for Work	Base value	Alternative variable	Revised SROI
Increased Confidence in the Future			
Drop-off	20%	30%	3.81
Drop-off	20%	10%	4.27
Drop-off	70%	60%	4.34
Displacement	70%	80%	3.89
Value of Practical Support			
Deadweight	40%	30%	4.03
Attribution	20%	10%	4.03
Attribution	20%	30%	4.01
Increased Employment 75 through Age at Work Team			
Drop-off	20%	10%	4.29
Drop-off	20%	30%	3.79
Attribution	20%	30%	3.88
Attribution	20%	10%	4.16
112 Through Self Reporting			
Drop-off	50%	40%	4.19
Drop-off	50%	60%	3.87

Attribution	50%	40%	4.13
Attribution	50%	60%	3.91
Recruitment Costs			
Attribution	20%	10%	4.02
Attribution	20%	30%	4.01

Audits & Matrix Impact	Base value	Alternative variable	Revised SROI
Reviews leading to a change in policies or practices			
Deadweight	50%	40%	4.10
Deadweight	50%	60%	3.94
Attribution	20%	10%	4.07
Attribution	20%	30%	3.97

It should be noted that this report is being submitted for accreditation by Social Value UK and is therefore subject to external review. At this stage, we do not anticipate any amendments to the assumptions or indicators used.