

Employability 50+ years:

The Galashiels Partnership established four priorities for the current 3-year plan (2018-2021). Each priority was split out into a sub-group with key Partnership members closely aligned with that field of work participating. Employability for people aged 50+ years was one of these strands.

Description:

The sub-group is chaired by Mike Niven, Employer & Partnership Manager with Jobcentre Plus. Member partners include Volunteer Centre Borders, Borders College, Momentum, Citizens Advice Bureau, Employment Support Service (ESS), Men's Shed, Borders Care Voice, Works+, CLDS, Age Scotland, and more.

Partners came together to identify a shared vision, aims and outcomes for the lifetime of the plan. The group established their vision as:

- to gain insight into the employment and volunteering options open to people aged 50+ and to gain understanding of barriers people may experience
- to work with people aged 50+ to build a steering group who will plan and co-produce a 'Next Steps' Fair, designed to build confidence, awareness of employment and volunteering options locally, and challenge fixed mindsets about the value of an older workforce
- to establish a 'golden thread' of the value that volunteering can bring to improving life chances for people of all ages.

The sub-group identified four actions to take, these are:

- To host a 'Next Steps' Fair planned and delivered with people aged 50+
- Map current best practice
- Gather insight from across the partnership about what opportunities there are for people aged 50+
- Build a 'golden thread' of the value of volunteering and the benefit of an older workforce

Outcomes:

Four key partners established a steering group to further the plans around the 'Next Steps' Fair; partners were: JCP, ESS, Momentum, Borders College.

Partners have completed mapping and insight gathering as set out in initial plans, and have agreed to continue to develop our understanding and awareness of local and regional opportunities on an ongoing basis.

Learners who have attended 50+ training courses with JCP and Borders College have been contacted and engaged in a questionnaire to find out what would be useful to them; questionnaire participants will be invited to attend a face-to-face focus group to gain further insight into what would be useful from their perspective – resulting in co-production with the 50+ community, and an increase in people having a say in local decision-making.

Quotes:

"Being part of the 50+ sub –group gives me the opportunity to discuss with other organisations best practices in moving customers forward. It allows us all to promote a positive and consistent message to these customers that help is

available not only to improve their job prospects but also their lifestyle and wellbeing. My opinion is that the customers are more confident about the help and guidance we give them as the messages are consistent from all partners. This encourages them to engage with the different partners and over time will improve their lives through work, volunteering or networking with others and widening their social circle.” Dougie Pringle, Employer Advisor, DWP (12/07/19).

Next Steps:

Partners will meet after summer to plan the next stages, and also plan to meet with the Youth Sub-group to create opportunities for intergenerational participation in the ‘Next Steps’ event. Partners will also be looking at building a learning programme utilising funding made available through Momentum.