



Isle of Wight
Council

Age Friendly Island Age Friendly Employer

National and Local Context

- Nationally there are more people than ever aged 65 years or over (18.4 per cent); on the Island there has been an increase of people aged 65 and over of 24.7 per cent in the last 10 years (from 2011 to 2021).
- Noting the scale of our population that are over the age of 50 is important in recognising how many people who use our services may find barriers to them due to age. It also helps us to make our services more accessible to all.
- 47% of our staff are over 50

Age Friendly Island – Age UK (IW)

Older people (aged 50+) have the right to:

- **Inclusion:** access and enjoy the same opportunities as others, so strengthening relationships with the Island community.
- **Health and wellbeing:** Live well by having choice and access to services which enable them to lead fulfilling lives and age well.
- **Digital:** The support to access digital technology. To learn new skills to use online services and stay digitally connected with friends and family.
- **Participation:** Live, work and enjoy leisure activities as anyone else. The wider Island community recognises the skills and assets that older people bring.
- **Contribution:** Influence and shape decisions that affect all aspects of their life and the Island community.
- **Confidence:** Live independently in their home and community. When needing support, older people should have the confidence that they will be heard with respect.

These are some of the projects that are either complete or underway across the council with AFI in mind:

- Accessible consultations project
- Isle of Wight Against Scams Partnership (IWASP)
- ‘Safe and Well’ visits from IW Fire and Rescue Service (now part of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire Service)
- IWC as an Age Friendly Employer
- Support for work with domestic abuse team
- ‘Pavements for People’ report in partnership with Island Roads.
- ‘Out and About’ project during COVID-19

Age Friendly Island – IWC commitments

As a council, in September 2019 we pledged to play our part in helping develop an Age Friendly Island.

- Our buildings are accessible, and our digital services are built around customer needs
- Front line staff receive Age Friendly training
- Older people are valued for their contributions in supporting us to help people stay health and active and live with dignity and enjoyment in later life
- Our employment practices recognise the needs of older employees and promote flexible working.

Our buildings are accessible, and our digital services are built around customer needs

- We worked with representatives and colleagues to redesign the reception area of County Hall to better meet people's needs.
- We've included Sight for Wight QR codes on County Hall for people with sight loss (who may or may not be 50+).
- We've reviewed our website – working with Age Friendly Island representatives to develop content, site structure and design.

Front line staff receive Age Friendly Island training

- More than 70 members of TeamIWC have undertaken the AFI training.

Recently colleagues said of the training:

“the simulation exercises helped us understand how it was for people with hearing and sight loss”

“[It was] really thought provoking and gave a real insight into the challenges people face”

“I honestly found all sections extremely helpful and found the dementia information very helpful”.

Following the training, some changes already identified within services include:

- Informing policy and strategy moving forward
- Being more aware and making others aware - considering the challenges that older people face when planning and implementing communications
- Being more patient and understanding on the phone
- Chief Executive's call for 'Fit for Family' communications

The Island Perspective: Isle of Wight Council experience with the Age Friendly Employer Pledge

Our employment practices recognise the needs of older employees and promote flexible working

Pre 2019 we already offered:

- Flexible working
- Agile working
- Part-time opportunities
- Job application processes which did not collect age related information

- We knew there was more to do...



Age Friendly Employer – Centre for Ageing Better pledge and action plan

Age UK (IW) pulled together a focus group of staff over 50 who identified the following areas for development

- 1. Being flexible about flexible working
- 2. Hiring age positively
- 3. Ensure everyone has the health support they need
- 4. Encourage career development at any age
- 5. Create an age positive culture

Staff focus group facilitated by Age UK IW said:

Being flexible about flexible working

Flexible working needs change through your career – we need to acknowledge that and upskill managers

There is little support for carers through work – we need a Carers' Policy linked to flexible working. People's individual demands for caring vary greatly. E.g. maternity and adoption rights. How about supporting Grandparents?

Hiring Age Positively

Employment Offer - not up to date, not all elements available to everyone e.g. relocation costs. If you are applying for jobs and you are over 60, how do you negotiate flexible working opportunities

Apprenticeships: Imagery, graphics and language focus on younger people

Does the application form always need which school? Or which qualifications? Older employees may not have the qualification but have the skills.

Ensure everyone has the health support they need

- Admitting you have a health problem can make you feel vulnerable
- Is it mandatory for managers to have training around managing health support at work?
- Challenge around developing understanding around illnesses where symptoms can come and go e.g. Rheumatoid Arthritis or Menopause
- Post Covid Planning for those working from home: balance between corporate, manager, team and individual needs.

Encourage career development at any age

- Apprenticeships are for young people only – or that's the perception
- Managers stop talking about career development once you're over 50

Create an age positive culture

- Tackling the issues raised by the focus group and signing up to the Age Friendly Employer Pledge should achieve this.

Being flexible about flexible working

Promotion and awareness raising of our flexible working offer amongst staff and managers

- *Regular campaigns on flexible and agile working run throughout Summer 2021 and ongoing*
- *Updated employment offer document*

Develop toolkits for managers and staff on flexible & agile working

- *Managers' Toolkit and all staff toolkit developed, published and promoted*
- *Regularly monitoring access of Sway documents*
- *Complete and monitored through Corporate Services and Strategy Board*

Hiring Age Positively

Developed and republished our Employment Offer document

- Benefits of age friendly approaches made explicit
- *Reviewed and updated wording on adverts and added case studies/images of 'older' apprentices.*

Promote Age Friendly/Diversity through Apprenticeship Board.

- *2017 – 2022 55 over 50s have enrolled on apprenticeship programmes – that is 20% of all apprentices enrolled*
- *Apprentice age now monitored through quarterly reports at Apprenticeship Board*
- *Information for older employees wanting to be an apprentice e.g. flexible working, impact on wages etc*

Ensure everyone has the health support they need

Explore what we can do to support older workforce to remain in employment when they may be less able to continue their previous roles due to age related illnesses or conditions

- *Absence & wellbeing strategy and action plan developed and monitored Qtrly through CMT*
- *Health and Wellbeing Hub live and constantly being reviewed and refreshed*
- *Continual promotion of EAP offer and internal OH service*
- *Staff carers' network now in place facilitated by DAS*
- *OH doing health checks for services*
- *Mental Health first Aiders network established and supported through training and regular updates/refreshes*

Raise awareness amongst managers about specific health conditions e.g. menopause, musculoskeletal conditions, circulatory problems

- *Menopause guidance developed and implemented*
- *Launch of Health & Wellbeing Hub*
- *Refreshed Occupational Health Information pages*
- *Promotion of information available to staff*
- *Menopause training offer launched– Sept 2022*
- *OH Advisor to work up muscular/skeletal advice and support offer*

Encourage career development at any age

Develop a mid-career development conversation tip sheet for managers to reflect on career development and how to start the conversation

- To be incorporated into training re 1-1s and objective setting*
- People Performance Management guidance updated and refreshed*
- Workforce planning sessions across Council and workforce profile data available to management teams*
- All directorates have attended sessions and have good workforce plans in place*

Review of what is offered and when it is offered around retirement planning. E.g. more than financial planning

- *Financial planning session revised.*
- *Financial wellbeing article in staff comms and built into review of health and wellbeing policy*
- *Attendees at last retirement planning workshop have been contacted regarding further workshops/information:*
- *Suggested funeral planning, will writing, volunteering activities*
- *Review staff survey comments from older workforce to shape future initiatives*
- *Volunteering information session held and promoted to those attending the retirement planning course.*
- *Information now held on the Learning Hub*

Create an age positive culture

Review our workforce data

- LGA workforce planning support commenced 2021 – 2022
- Workforce planning template developed with service planning document
- IWC now part of national LGA WF planning network.
- Delivered workforce planning sessions with all directorates by end 2022
- Workforce action plans monitored on service boards with refreshed data being sent out to directors annually

- *Age profile is regularly reviewed, and practices updated accordingly.*
- *Percentage of staff making flexible working requests and proportion agreed by managers.*
- *Percentage of staff disclosing a health condition*
- *Proportion receiving agreed support, and sustained support.*
- *Transfer/exit interview policy and process reviewed to enable greater intelligence around retention*

Age Friendly Champions

We have Age Friendly Island champions across TeamIWC who can help you to think about how you can improve your service – just get in touch with them and see how they can help. Maybe invite them to a team meeting? Or if you've got something specific in mind, just call for a chat about things to consider?

Age Friendly Champions

- Based within key areas where we can feed "age friendly" into the work we do/projects/documentation etc – i.e. customer service, trading standards (age friendly is built into all new initiatives e.g. focus on digital security and staying safe online. Living street project is about removing clutter so it is not hazardous for people to move around or navigate - old/excessive signs, poorly placed bins and cycle racks etc.
- Action plan in place to look at ways of continuing to support the wider multi agency group now that Age UK funding has ceased and keeping momentum going within the council

Age Friendly Employer pledge update:

“Our employment offer supports flexible working around people’s personal needs, including reduced hours, agile working arrangements and part-time contracts. We support all our staff with learning and development opportunities no matter their age and we are proud that one in seven of our apprentices is aged over 50. We understand that our older members of staff may have caring responsibilities and have supported the development of a staff networking group to share experiences and gain support. Our team of Age-friendly champions support their colleagues when planning and implementing changes, to ensure full consideration is given to older people accessing our services effectively. “Our in-house Age-friendly training has been well attended. It has helped to inform policy and strategy moving forward, made more people aware of the challenges experienced by older people, especially in relation to communicating with us, where we’ve adopted best practice to support people to achieve what they need. Having attended the training myself, I found that it gave me a much better insight into the barriers faced by our older residents.”



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Thank you