

Newsletter

November 2014

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Editorial

Risk and Potential for Local Enterprise Partnerships

Back in 2012, Lord Heseltine undertook a review of UK competitiveness and came up with 89 recommendations for action. Devolving power to the Local Enterprise Partnerships (partnerships between local authorities and businesses) was one of his key themes.

Through a £2 billion Government Local Growth Fund and the first tranche of £6 billion of £12 billion worth of Growth Deals, the key economic levers of housing, skills and transport funding will all be available for the 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to pull and push as needs must. They will decide priorities and deliver much of the 2014-2020 European Structural Funds programme too, including the European Social Fund (ESF). "Smart, sustainable growth" is the European objective, but this needs to be coupled with achieving social dimensions. It seems a huge challenge for relatively small organisations.

The LEPs are employer driven with local authorities, skills training organisations and a smattering of university specialists typically making up boards. Local union leaders don't tend to figure much though the TUC and unions recognise the LEPs have much to offer in building employment. Engagement with employees and jobseekers in their areas would seem to be a real need if their issues are to be taken into consideration effectively.

The LEPs replaced the Labour Government's Regional Development Agencies. Adherents to them argue they can bring familiarity with local conditions. Bringing this together in the most creative way should, in theory, enable LEPs to spot the possibilities for stimulating economic growth. They will need to respond well to the challenge they now face if they are to avoid the common fate of political

footballs: resting in the long grass as some new and supposedly better idea is brought into play at some point.

On the other hand, Ed Milliband has said that a future Labour Government would retain the LEPs and build their effectiveness. There is a wealth of experience they can draw on to support the harder to reach groups which ESF funds are aimed at. A strategy of building employer and employee collaboration could consolidate their political neutrality should Labour win power in 2015. Failing to understand the significance of age and demographics could be a story of missed opportunity. One hopes not.

A startling omission in the strategic growth plans produced by the LEPs, however, is recognition of the impact of demographic change, including the issues raised and potential offered by an ageing workforce. (Only two of the 39 plans submitted have included a specific recognition of age and employment issues.) This does not auger especially well for their social goals being recognised when the new ESF programme becomes operative next year. TAEN has produced a webinar *Older workers talking to us* specifically to support LEPs with strategies to deal with age and employment issues. It is available on the [TAEN website](http://www.taen.org.uk).

Chris Ball

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More than Two Million Retirees Unable to Find Suitable Work

The National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) recently released the first results of its new research series *Understanding Retirement*.

It reveals that the 20 million people in the 50-70 year old age group have a much more varied experience of retirement than might have been expected and that despite the Government's ambition to support over-50s in the UK labour market, more than two million 50-70 year old retirees are looking for suitable work but cannot find it.

The research focused on people aged 50-70 and within this age range two distinct groups emerged: those who identified themselves as 'retired' (44 per cent) and those who considered themselves 'non-retired' (56 per cent). In the 'retired' group, 35 per cent were below the state pension age (65 for men and 62 for women), illustrating that for some people retirement starts before the state pension age.

Conversely, of everyone at state pension age or above, almost one in five (19 per cent) were still doing some paid work, indicating that for many people who are at or older than the state pension age today, retirement no longer means not working.

Among those in the retired group who were not working, one third (2.1 million people) would like a job that offers some flexibility and is not too physically demanding, but had not been able to find one. Of the 'non-retired' group, more than 30 per cent, or 3.2 million people, are not working, suggesting that many more 50-70 year olds in this group may also be looking for suitable employment.

Of the group that identified themselves as 'retired' but are still working, almost a third (31 per cent) said they work to make ends meet. The remaining 69 per cent work for a combination of extra money and because they enjoy it.

Fifty-eight per cent of the 'retired' group had retired before the state pension age. In stark contrast, only 23 per cent of those 50-70 year olds who are 'non-retired' expect to do the same.

Pension provision is noticeably lower among the 'non-retired' group with more than one in four (24 per cent) having no private pension and no other savings (nearly twice the proportion of the 'retired', 14 per cent).

Commenting on the research, Joanne Segars, Chief Executive, NAPF, said:

"This research shows that retirement has already changed significantly from the traditional image of a gold watch, going on a cruise and happily never working again. The picture is often more complicated and challenging than many of today's 50-70 year olds ever expected.

"For this age group, which is often generalised as the richest generation in the UK, the reality is many are looking for suitable work to make ends meet but cannot find it. They need jobs that are not too physically demanding and offer flexible working, in many cases to allow them to fit in caring responsibilities or to manage their levels of stress."

A printed report providing full analysis of the phase 1 research will be available in December 2014. Click [here](#) for the diagram *To work or not to work? Work and retirement among 50-70 year olds* which illustrates the headline findings of the research.

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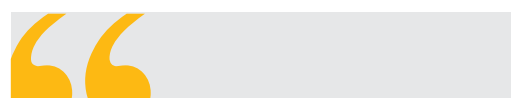
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BBC Investigation Finds Age Bias on Universal Jobmatch

An investigation by the BBC has found that the Government's Universal Jobmatch website is publishing advertisements that possibly breach anti-age discrimination laws. In job advertisements posted online by Reed, one of the UK's biggest employment agencies, more than 800 jobs specified "recent graduate".

A typical example of wording used in job advertisements reads: "My client is recruiting a recent graduate to join their extremely busy team. You should be looking for a career, have good customer service skills and good administration skills including data entry."

The BBC consulted with a law firm which specialises in age discrimination cases who stated that use of terms such as "recent graduates" implies they are looking for younger applicants.

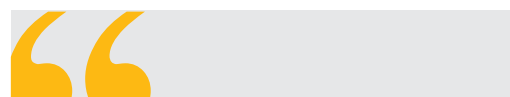


We are always looking to recruit talented, ambitious young people

The BBC also identified this example on Universal Jobmatch of an advertisement which could be breaking age discrimination laws with its wording. It read: "We are always looking to recruit talented, ambitious young people who may fit well into one of our progressive thinking departments such as media, including social media, TV, press officer or other departments such as office administration."

Reed told the BBC it agreed such terms were "inappropriate" and, as a result of the BBC investigation, company policy would change to ensure similar terms would not be used in future. In addition, Reed would also be re-training its staff in equality legislation.

However, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Government department responsible for Universal Jobmatch, said it did not think terms such as "recent graduate" were discriminatory. "We have thorough checks and balances in place and remove anything which doesn't meet our standards," it said in a statement.



My client is recruiting a recent graduate to join their extremely busy team

The investigation will strike a chord with all who are alarmed at the evidence of age discrimination in recruitment of new staff. While this is, of course, unlawful, people inside the industry, who occasionally confide their 'black arts', inform us that employers not infrequently indicate age preferences when searching for candidates. One individual said that, far from recruiters ignoring age, it was "one of the *first* things" they looked at in applicants. There are doubtless 'good guys' appalled at the picture described, but keeping quiet while individual careers are brought to a wasteful end surely sullies the reputations and standing of the industry in the public eye.

Well done (on this occasion) to the BBC!

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Older Workers Opt Out of NEST While Younger Workers Stay In

A generational split seems to be playing out in the automatic pensions enrolment landscape. New data released by NEST (the National Employment Savings Trust, set up by the Government) shows that younger workers have the highest participation in automatic pensions enrolment while older workers are leaving the scheme in droves.

Only five per cent of workers under 30 years old opt out, although before the new workplace pension rules were launched in 2012 more than 25 per cent of this group had said they intended to do so. The actual opt-out figures suggest a dramatic shift in the retirement saving behaviour of younger workers. In contrast, older workers have the highest number of opt-outs.

Some 4.5 million workers have so far been automatically enrolled since its introduction two years ago. Younger workers lead the way on pension saving, with lowest opt-outs, while older workers bring up the rear with the highest proportion deciding not to remain in the scheme, with more than 28 per cent opting out among those aged 60 and over. One in four older workers opt out, compared with one in 20 younger workers doing so.

Commenting on the findings, NEST Chief Executive, Tim Jones, said:

"We know that younger workers often think they are too young to start saving in a pension but so far this hasn't played out. Workers under 30 are the most likely to stay in their automatic enrolment scheme, with 95 per cent staying in. These participation figures suggest that the policy is working and particularly with the younger generations."

They could collectively be turning down around £140 million in employer contributions and tax relief

If trends observed at NEST continue and over a quarter of eligible workers aged 60 and over opt out of automatic enrolment, they could collectively be turning down around £140 million that they could have received in employer contributions and tax relief if they had continued saving for five years instead.

Consultation on Earnings Threshold for Automatic Enrolment

The Department for Work and Pensions is seeking views on a review of the earnings thresholds for automatic enrolment into a workplace pension for April 2015 to March 2016. The deadline for responses is 25 November 2014.

Click [here](#) for more details.

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Are the Government's Back-to-Work Approaches Working?

What of the Government's back to work approaches? How well are they really doing in helping the unemployed back to work?

It will be recalled that the Work Programme represents their single 'joined up' solution to supporting the longer term unemployed. One aspect of it is that, unlike the earlier New Deal programmes of the previous Government, there is no attempt in the Work Programme to differentiate between the kinds of support provided by the main programme. Instead, much is left to the market and the system of incentives the Programme embodies.

Contracted providers are expected to tune their provision so that the needs of key groups are flexibly addressed. The more they succeed in getting hard to reach and difficult groups back to work, the more they will earn. Back to work success is rewarded financially, or so it was intended.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has now published a two-year job outcome review of the Work Programme. It shows its success in getting people back to work over a three-year period, from its start in June 2011 to June 2014. (The two-year job outcome refers to success levels in getting people back to work and holding on to a job of some kind for a two-year period.)

The review tells us that 1.61 million people have been referred to the Programme over the June 2011 to June 2014 period, representing different categories of need (and therefore difficulty in the labour market). Not every group has the same levels of success. People on Jobseeker's Allowance showed a small improvement in success in finding and holding on to work, judged according to the DWP's minimum performance expectations measure.

Some other groups fared less well. For example, Employment and Support Allowance claimants overall performed badly though those expected to be fit for work within six months performed substantially better than the DWP's contractual measure. People with a disability performed most disappointingly under the Programme. There are big differences in the success rates of different providers.



The over-50s performed poorly

More men than women succeeded in getting jobs under the Work Programme, with the gap increasing. And while young people did exceptionally well, 25-49 year olds performed "not so well" and the over-50s performed poorly.

As we in TAEN predicted some four years ago, without specific measures targeted at the 50+ jobseeker, it was always likely that their disadvantages in the labour market would prove a ball and chain drag to getting back to work. In a TAEN campaign to meet the welfare-to-work providers some three years ago, we found little evidence that they were accepting and responding to this concern.

It gives us little pleasure to say:

"We told you so."

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Become a Media Case Study to Improve Understanding of Issues Facing Older Workers

A news story or feature containing an example showing how things *really* are for the older worker or jobseeker can have a powerful impact.

Over the years TAEN has been a first point of contact for journalists seeking such examples. All manner of case studies are sought. We try to help because this is an excellent way to influence politicians and the wider public. In fact, miles of newsprint and hours of broadcast coverage have been enlivened by case studies of organisations or individuals provided by TAEN. (Occasionally individuals have even received job offers as a result!)

If you would like to help with TAEN's media work, have a story to tell or know someone else who has one, why not get in touch with us? Your details will be saved on our confidential database. We choose

appropriate studies and then check with the individuals concerned before passing their details on. Usually you will then get contacted for a telephone interview but sometimes something grander is arranged – a slot on the *Today* programme or television perhaps!

We get the press we deserve and good news stories need good human stories. So do let us know if you would like to help. Some people are happy to share their experiences anonymously, which can work too. So if this interests you, fill out the **case study form** on the TAEN website and we will do the rest.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council Wins International Employer Award

Stoke-on-Trent City Council was one of 12 winners of the 2014 AARP Best Employers International Award designed to promote innovative human resource and workforce practices that benefit workers aged 50+. The Council was the only UK entrant considered worthy of the Award this year. The other Award winners came from Germany, Italy, Poland, Australia, Japan, Singapore and South Korea.

The Award was established to recognise the fact that as workforces increasingly age worldwide, employers will need to discover ways of making working longer possible, particularly for workers who might consider working until their late 60s a challenge.

The Award was presented by Chris Ball, a member of the International Judging Panel, to Stoke-on-Trent City Council Assistant Chief Executive Charlie Stewart on 10 September 2014 at a conference of more

than 100 representatives from Local Enterprise Partnerships, local businesses and Jobcentre Plus.

Chris Ball said of the decision: "The impression formed by the International Judging Panel was that while many British employers had failed to demonstrate the highest level of pro-active measures to keep older workers in their organisations, and gain from the added value they offer, Stoke-on-Trent City Council had set out with a positive agenda to do precisely this.

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Specifically, their application made reference to the following policies:

- A commitment to become an age-friendly city. The Council is 'working to make Stoke-on-Trent a great place to grow older'.
- Membership of Workage, a three-year EU-funded project involving Nottingham Trent University in looking for 'what works?' This comprises age-neutral interventions through which the Council seeks to attract and sustain a confident, skilled workforce. The project will commit the Council to make appropriate interventions in terms of modified working conditions, with the aim of enabling workers to defer retirement.
- Adoption of a series of positive human resources 'people policies' for Council employees that will put Stoke-on-Trent in the forefront of age-friendly employers."

Councillor Alastair Watson, Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Human Resources at Stoke-on-Trent City Council, commented:

"It is a great honour to receive this

prestigious award, as it demonstrates our commitment to supporting our ageing workforce, and encourages workers to remain actively employed. We value older staff, and the experience, knowledge and skills they bring, as an integral part of our workforce. The authority is well aware of the economic and social benefits of retaining older employees, which include productivity, financial security, health and social inclusion."

About AARP

The **AARP** is a US-based non profit, non partisan organisation with nearly 38 million members. It campaigns on issues such as healthcare, employment security and retirement planning. Its international work focuses on facilitating stakeholder dialogue to promote best policies and practices related to population ageing.



Above Chris Ball congratulates Charlie Stewart of Stoke-on-Trent City Council on winning the AARP Award.

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New Report Highlights Employment Challenges of the Over-50s

The Prince's Initiative for Mature Enterprise (PRIME), the International Longevity Centre and Business In The Community have issued the first of three reports looking at the employment challenges of the over-50s and the economic barriers they face.

The report *The missing million: illuminating the employment challenges of the over-50s* explores the extent to which older workers have been forced out of their jobs.

The authors estimate that nearly one million people aged 50-64 have been made 'involuntarily jobless' – pushed out of their previous jobs through a combination of redundancy, ill health or early retirement. Those aged 55-59 are particularly exposed to involuntary exit of this kind, with 57 per cent of all exits amongst this age group the result of such factors. The report also explores why such a high proportion of people aged 50-64 leave the workforce completely. A similar pattern emerges with long-term sickness, caring responsibilities and early retirement explaining the majority of inactivity amongst the pre-state pension age group.

The authors estimate that around 1.2 million people aged over 50 would be willing to work if the right opportunity arose but argue that efforts need to be taken to ensure that these individuals do not end up permanently inactive. In total, 26 per cent of people aged 50-64 who are currently out of work would like to work and this rises to 45.8 per cent of all those out of work aged 50-54.

They believe that involuntary exit from the labour market can be preventable with the extension and promotion of flexible working, particularly for those with ill health or providing care. They say that people over 50 want to see more flexible working options afforded to them with 15 per cent of this age group saying they would even accept less pay to work fewer hours. However, their research suggests that employers are still not doing enough to meet the demand for flexible working. Additionally, there is a continued lack of employer support for older workers who are significantly more likely to be made redundant than younger workers.

Their analysis also shows that if the skills and abilities of the 50-64 year old age group were fully utilised and their employment rate matched those of the people in their 30s and 40s, UK GDP could be £88.4 billion higher in 2014 (an uplift of 5.6 per cent of GDP). And the report emphasises the point that, contrary to some popular views, a higher proportion of older workers do not 'crowd out' younger workers as there is no fixed number of jobs in the economy.

This report includes many valuable insights, supporting the same firm conclusions that TAEN has articulated for many years, namely that there is a powerful case for society as a whole to be prepared to work longer but the first focus should be on enabling people to work up to state pension age. Employment for the one million economically inactive in their 50s and early 60s would bring considerable benefit to them as individuals as well as to the world of work and the wider economy.

The next two reports will focus on employment solutions and the benefits of maintaining an older workforce.

Click [here](#) to download the report.



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Exploring Extended Working Lives from a Cultural Perspective

TAEN is producing a video which looks at extended working lives from a range of cultural perspectives. It focuses particularly on the experiences and views of post-war migrants to the UK and their descendants.

In conversations with older people from this group, the video looks at where they have worked and for how long; if they are working past state pension age; and if they have dependants and/or caring responsibilities.

The video is one of a series commissioned by TAEN as part of its European Social Fund Technical Assistance Project. It will be available on the ESF Media Centre of the TAEN website later this month.

Seminar Series on Working in Later Life Relunched

TAEN and the London School of Economics (LSE) have relaunched their series of academic seminars covering issues related to working in later life. The seminars are for researchers, policy experts and practitioners.

Fuller Working Lives

The first in the series was held on 23 September. This seminar featured discussion and analysis of the Government's Fuller Working Lives policy. John Macnicol, Visiting Professor at the LSE, started the proceedings by locating the Government's Fuller Working Lives policy within a historical overview of its retirement policies. Lis Robinson and Ellen Wasden from the Department for Work and Pensions outlined and explained the key

headline facts from the Fuller Working Lives policy. These contributions, which considered the profound changes to the end of paid working life, were followed by a question and discussion session led by Sarah Vickerstaff, Professor of Work and Employment at the University of Kent. The seminar continued with a presentation from Ros Altmann, the Government's Business Champion for Older Workers.



Above A delegate makes a point to Ellen Wasden and Lis Robinson of the DWP.

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Mid-life Career Reviews

The second seminar, held on 24 September and sponsored by the ESF, focused on policy and practice issues in mid-life career reviews. The Government's Fuller Working Lives strategy includes a commitment to ensure that older people can access in-depth career reviews for the first time. The seminar considered the following questions: What would this mean and what kinds of policy and practice issues are thrown up by the experiences of older people seeking work as well as recent research? What does research, including comparative research of mid-life career reviews in other countries, teach us?

This seminar, expertly chaired by Professor Stephen McNair, considered these issues in some depth. Jane Watts of NIACE presented the results of a recent Mid-Life Career Review pilot supported by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills. Ian Borkett outlined the contribution of TUC unionlearn to the same pilot, drawing out, in particular, the creative role performed by recognised union learning representatives at the workplace. Jean Marie Jungblut (EUROFOUND) and Fabienne Caser (ANACT, France) offered examples of international research, bringing a valuable and interesting comparative dimension to the seminar. Speakers commented enthusiastically on the value of the mid-life career review.

Click [here](#) for copies of the presentations from both seminars.



Above Ian Borkett of TUC unionlearn discusses their Mid-life Career Review pilot.

Future seminars

TAEN has established a small steering group of academics to help decide on the content and timing of future events. The group will develop a regular programme of seminars which will contribute to informed and objective discussion of issues covering many aspects of working in later life, including: Government policies, labour market trends, demographic pressures, health, disability, social care, and retirement. We hope that this will attract many researchers and practitioners working in this general field who are within travelling distance of London.

TAEN Joins Project Combating Addiction Amongst the 50+

People who struggle to get work include a large group of people with health problems and declining employability.

Addiction issues are part of this picture and individuals frequently need to deal with their addictions simply to stand a chance of getting work. Having a drink or drugs problem can also put people in jobs at risk.

People over 50 are not necessarily the first group one would think of as being problem

drinkers. However, in the last decade alcohol-related hospital admissions in those aged 65 and over have increased by 176 per cent for men and 145 per cent for women. While younger people may indulge in binge drinking on a Saturday night, older people are more likely to be hitting the bottle in the quiet of their own homes. Alcohol-related, age-adjusted death rates amongst those

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aged 55-74 have increased by 87 per cent for men and 53 per cent for women and are highest for men and women in this age category.

With this in mind, the Big Lottery has allocated up to £25 million over seven years to support evidence-based preventative approaches to dealing with addiction amongst the over-50 age group. Their programme is called: Rethink Good Health. Addaction, the substance abuse charity, has now won a contract to deliver this national

programme. TAEN will be part of a consortium of organisations working in Sheffield as a pilot area.

TAEN's role initially will be to advise the consortium on employment issues and to work with unions and workplace organisations in the Sheffield area to explain issues relating to health and work, including the issue of substance abuse. Work will begin on the project in 2015.

For more information contact Liz Tootell at Addaction: l.tootell@addaction.org.uk

NICA Conference Examines Better Support for Working Carers

A final conference of *Negotiating Improvements for Working Carers of Adults* (NICA), an EU funded project, was held in Brussels on 22 and 23 October. It was attended by delegates from employee organisations across Europe, including the UK, Belgium, Malta, Bulgaria and Poland, with the support of carers organisations, Carers UK and Euro Carers.

The NICA project was designed by TAEN and the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) Educational Trust working in partnership. Both the project and the conference were designed to gather information, raise awareness and deliver training support for union and employer negotiators on the needs of working carers in their own countries. The project was submitted to the EU following research on the growing numbers of people providing informal (or part-time) care for a family member in their own home, or that of the disabled person, whilst maintaining their own career or job.

The needs of working carers have been addressed in numerous initiatives in the past two decades, but almost exclusively in

relation to parenthood and children. The increase in life expectancy throughout Europe, together with the expectation that people will remain working and earning longer, provides new and challenging tensions. Addressing them was the rationale of the NICA project.

The needs of people providing informal care (for example for elderly relatives or children with long term care needs) are quite different from those of parents of young children. Older carers may have short term and changing needs depending on the medical conditions of those they care for. Furthermore, the needs of older working carers must be understood in the context of demographic trends, coupled with policy changes in the delivery of community care for older and/or disabled people. All these factors mean the employment conditions and management of informal working carers need to be considered distinctively.

Many people provide care, though they may not think of themselves as 'carers' as such. However, the move away from care provision in expensive and often isolating institutions

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Older carers may have short term and changing needs

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has supported the growth of an army of informal carers, frequently providing essential support to someone in society. Most carers are women, though 40 per cent of carers who continue working are men.

"We aim to create working conditions more sympathetic to the needs of working carers; conditions which support them in their caring and help them do their own jobs better. We want to help people maintain their incomes and continue doing jobs they need or enjoy, without being forced to leave simply *because* they become carers, and we want management to recognise the additional strengths and skills which people often gain by being a working carer and the value they bring to organisations," said Judith Jackson, Head of Education in the GFTU Educational Trust.

The project's outputs include a research report by Sheila Barrett of the University of Greenwich, and two courses (two-day and one-day versions) designed by Ian Manborde of Ruskin College Oxford. Carers UK's Katherine Wilson contributed specialist expertise along with other speakers in a series of round tables in Malta, Bulgaria and the UK. Interesting ideas include 'carers' passports' adopted by some larger employers; variations of tele-working, emergency cover arrangements; ways in which carers' needs could be protected (including their health and wellbeing); and arguments to use in explaining or justifying the adoption of special arrangements or rights for working carers, both to other employees and managers at all levels in organisations.

The GFTU is now planning to establish an action group on working carers. For more information contact Judith@gftu.org.uk.

Seminar on Intergenerational Working

This half-day TAEN seminar, which will be held on 5 February 2015 in London, will tackle issues relating to intergenerational working. It is targeted at HR professionals and others working in policy and employment research areas interested in the topic.

Speakers include: Shelagh Prosser, Equality and Diversity Consultant; Jennifer Barrow, Financial Conduct Authority; Justine James, Talent Smoothie; and Charlotte Breen, Local Government Association.

TAEN Membership for Individuals

In the past, the majority of our members tended to be organisations but we have recently been approached by individuals who have expressed an interest in TAEN membership. As a result, we have introduced a new subscription rate of £10 per annum for individuals.

For more details, visit the [Membership](#) page on the website.