LETTER TO BRANCHES

@CWUNews The Communications Union www.cwu.org

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To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

National Older Workers Week (Now Age Pioneers Week) - 16 to 21 November 2026

National Older Workers Week (NOWW) was a UK initiative that championed the value of older workers and promoted age-inclusive employment practices. In 2024, 55/Redefined acquired the assets of WM People, the organisation behind NOWW. In 2025, the campaign was rebranded and expanded as **Age Pioneers Week**.

This evolution reflects the growing recognition that workers aged fifty and over are a vital strategic asset to employers and the wider economy. While the campaign's name has changed, its core mission remains the same, that being to promote *'age-inclusive workplaces, celebrate the contribution of older workers, and encourage employers to adopt age-positive employment practices.'*

The UK workforce is ageing with employees aged fifty and over now accounting for almost one-third of all workers. As such, measures to seek to support older workers and those who wish to work later in life are becoming increasingly important.

Age Pioneers Week celebrates the skills, knowledge, experience, and contributions of workers aged 50+. The campaign promotes age diversity, challenges age-related stereotypes and bias, and highlights the value of multigenerational workplaces.

A Global Movement for Age Inclusion

Last year, Age Pioneers Week reached more than 800,000 people, helping to raise awareness of the significant value that over-fifties bring to the workforce.

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The campaign's online content generated over 1.3 million views, and more than 60% of its 250,000-plus social media followers are based outside the UK. The initiative is now expanding across Europe, the Americas and beyond, aiming to reshape perceptions of age and create more inclusive and future-ready workplaces worldwide.

For more information, campaign resources and details on how to get involved, visit the **Age Pioneers Week 2026** website: Age Pioneers Week 2026 | 55/Redefined

The Role of Trade Unions

Trade unions and the TUC have a significant role to play in challenging outdated attitudes towards older workers.

The CWU is one of several unions calling on the UK Government to take a more active role in supporting older workers and promoting age-inclusive employment policies. This includes encouraging employers to sign up to the **Age-friendly Employer Pledge**, developed by the Centre for Ageing Better: Age-friendly Employer Pledge | Centre for Ageing Better

Older workers can face a range of challenges in the workplace, including age-related discrimination, increasing health concerns and work-related stress. Employers should ensure that these issues are appropriately addressed through meaningful consultation, reasonable workplace adjustments and, where appropriate, suitable stress risk assessments.

Phased Retirement and Sunsetting Arrangements

Phased retirement and so-called "sunsetting" arrangements can provide an initiative-taking and supportive approach to helping employees transition from full-time work into retirement.

These arrangements are used more widely in Europe and allow employees to reduce their working hours, responsibilities, or workload gradually rather than moving directly from full-time employment to retirement.

Phased retirement is often beneficial for both employers and employees, retaining valuable skills and experience within the workforce while supporting the health, wellbeing, and work-life balance of older workers. Such arrangements can also be identified and implemented following stress risk assessments or occupational health recommendations.

Further Advice on Workplace Issues

- **ACAS - Workplace Stress**

Causes and signs of stress - Managing work-related stress - Acas

- **Mind - Taking Care of My Mental Health at Work**

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Mental health at work | Mind
Work and stress | How to be mentally healthy at work | Mind

Support to Stay in Work

- **Access to Work**

  Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition: What Access to Work is - GOV.UK

This LTB is shared on behalf of CWU Central Services.

If you have any questions or need any further information, please contact:

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