

## **New guide to making the most of older volunteers' talents launched**

- **A new guide to help organisations make their volunteering practises more age-friendly and inclusive has been launched for National Volunteers' Week**
- **The guide warns organisations that their older volunteer base could fall sharply unless they eliminate barriers to inclusion and widen participation**
- **The Centre for Ageing Better's Age-Friendly and Inclusive Volunteering guide sets out key principles to avoid missing out on the talents of people in later life**

A new guide to supporting, recruiting and retaining older volunteers has been launched as part of National Volunteers' Week (1-7 June).

The [Age-Friendly and Inclusive Volunteering guide](#) introduces six principles that organisations working with volunteers can adopt to address barriers to inclusion and widen participation. These include offering more flexibility, providing opportunities for volunteers to meet and spend time with other people, and making use of volunteers' individual strengths. It also lists practical examples and recommendations that can help support, recruit and retain older volunteers.

The guide is based on a review into [community contributions in later life](#) carried out by the Centre for Ageing Better, in partnership with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Following the review, the Centre for Ageing Better awarded over £250,000 of government funding to five projects to pilot and share new approaches to age-friendly and inclusive volunteering.

The review warned that significant barriers to participation – such as caring responsibilities, health problems or changing life circumstances – put communities at risk of missing out on the talents of older volunteers. It also showed that people who are less financially secure, in poorer health or from a BAME background can face structural barriers which make them less likely to formally volunteer.

In 2016-17, people over the age of 50 contributed an estimated [£43.4 billion](#) to the UK economy through volunteering. The Centre for Ageing Better's review of volunteering amongst older people warned that this contribution is at risk of being eroded.

**Rachel Monaghan, Programme Manager at the Centre for Ageing Better, said:**

“Older people make a huge contribution to their communities through volunteering, whether that's helping out friends and neighbours or giving time regularly in more formal roles.

“Volunteering isn't just crucial for sustaining the activities of many organisations, it's also a really important way for people to stay in touch with the people around them and to keep doing the things they love in later life.

“But there's a real risk that people are locked out of these opportunities. Our guide can help organisations reliant on volunteers to support them so they are motivated to join and stay.”

**Embargo 00.01, 04/06/2019**  
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To mark the launch of the guide, the Centre for Ageing Better are hosting a [free interactive webinar](#) on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June for organisations supporting volunteers to join the conversation around age-friendly and inclusive volunteering.

## Ends

### Notes to Editors

For more information, please email [media@ageing-better.org.uk](mailto:media@ageing-better.org.uk), contact us on 07795 620 698, or call **Matt Dolman** on 020 3862 9185 or **Georgia Elander** on 020 3829 5218.

- The Centre for Ageing Better's guide, '[Age-Friendly and Inclusive Volunteering](#)' lists practical examples and recommendations on ways of enabling older people to volunteer. To request an advance copy of the guide, please contact Matt Dolman or Georgia Elander.
- The guide is based on Ageing Better's recent report on [community contributions in later life](#) in partnership with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.
- The projects awarded funding were:
  - '[Good Friends for All](#)', a funded community good-neighbour initiative from Age UK North Craven;
  - '[Late Spring](#)', an Age UK Oxfordshire project supporting bereaved people to take up volunteering opportunities;
  - '[Hastings Age-friendly Volunteering](#)', which will establish a group of champions to inspire people of all ages to volunteer;
  - '[From Supported to Supporter](#)', a project that supports people receiving help from volunteers into becoming volunteers themselves;
  - '[Growing Connections](#)', which engages older volunteers in community gardens across London to grow food.
- The '[What works?](#)' [webinar](#) will take place from 10.30-11.15am on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June.
- The monetary value of the direct economic contribution of volunteering by people aged 50 or over in the United Kingdom in 2016/17 amounted to £43.4bn. Age UK, [The Economic Contribution of Older People in the United Kingdom](#)
- The **Centre for Ageing Better** is a charity, funded by an endowment from The National Lottery Community Fund, working to create a society where everyone enjoys a good later life. We want more people to be in fulfilling work, in good health, living in safe, accessible homes and connected communities. By focusing on those approaching later life and at risk of missing out, we will create lasting change in society. We are bold and innovative in our approach to improving later lives. We work in partnership with a diverse range of organisations. As a part of the What Works network, we are grounded in evidence. Visit us at [ageing-better.org.uk](http://ageing-better.org.uk) or follow us on Twitter [@Ageing Better](https://twitter.com/Ageing_Better).