New tool launched to help older jobseekers into work

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The Age and Employment Network (TAEN) has launched a new guide for older jobseekers called: *"50+ Works: A Guide for Older Jobseekers"*. The new guide builds on the original *50+ Works* (http://www.50plusworks.com/) designed by TAEN for welfare industry frontline advisers, helping older people looking for work, but not intended specifically for the individual jobseekers themselves.

The launch of the new guide was sponsored by Shaw Trust, a national employment learning and skills charity operating across the UK that helps disabled and disadvantaged people back into work. TAEN and Shaw Trust have formed a new alliance to include TAEN's expertise with older jobseekers in the range of work carried out by the Trust.

The new guide is aimed especially at the 325,000 50-64-year-old people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, as well as many others who have lost their jobs through redundancy or those trying to return to work after sickness or full-time caring for a family member. Helping such people do the right things may avoid many problems or further complications that might arise in the future should they become unemployed.

The Rt Hon Steve Webb MP, Minister of State for Pensions, said: "*50+ Works: A Guide for Older Jobseekers* is a valuable and useful resource, for older workers as well as for jobseekers of any age. It offers clear information that neatly signposts and summarises the opportunities which people can take, maximising their potential to re-enter the workforce. I hope that older jobseekers, in particular, are able to make use of it, as they have a great deal to offer employers, including experience, maturity and knowledge."

Chris Ball, Chief Executive of TAEN, said: "This new guide was produced to fill a gap left after we built the original *50+ Works* for advisers of the older jobseeker. Whilst we had informed the welfare-to-work industry on how to be more supportive, it was clear that older jobseekers themselves wanted better information to be successful in their own job searches. They often spend months making painful mistakes and learning that things have changed since they were last looking for work. As a result, many remain out of work, growing increasingly depressed, disillusioned and more difficult to help. The new guide will help the individual who wants to be self-reliant, while being valuable to organisations like Shaw Trust, who support jobseekers through their programmes of structured help."

Roy O'Shaughnessy, Chief Executive of Shaw Trust, added: "Shaw Trust sponsored the launch of *50+ Works: A guide for Older Jobseekers* because we are committed to breaking down barriers that prevent over-50s from finding work. There has been a pressing need for information and advice to be easily available for older people so that they can better navigate the job market. We work closely with employers to help disadvantaged people into work. Whilst the Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people because of their age, we know that the story is more complicated. Our experience tells us that employers are keen to recruit a diverse mix of people from all age groups, but more must be done to signpost older people who are unemployed in the right direction. *50+ Works* achieves this and we look forward to working with The Age and Employment Network to support more over-50s into employment."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1.The new guide, *50+Works: A Guide for Older Jobseekers*, is available in hard copy or in pdf form online. It explains the modern labour market to jobseekers, as well as methods of finding a job in the new age. It details how jobseekers can engage in effective job search strategies, how to assess their own transferrable skills and takes them, stage-by-stage, through the application process.

2.The mark 1 version of *50+ Works* remains as a specialist website for welfare-to-work providers. It is the result of extensive research of the barriers older jobseekers face and includes many examples and checklists, as well as tips on how advisers can best support the older jobseeker. It was commissioned from TAEN in 2010 by the Department for Work and Pensions and supported by the European Social Fund and has been kept up to date by TAEN using ESF support. Its focus is on improving the standard of service from the welfare-to-work industry to providers.

3.TAEN will be working with Shaw Trust using both of the foregoing tools to increase the effectiveness of Shaw Trust advisers in programmes where they are supporting older jobseekers.

4.There is clear evidence that over-50s need more help to access the job market. Work undertaken by the International Longevity Centre think tank found that 1.2 million people aged over 50 are willing to work. Department for Work and Pensions statistics show that almost half (47%) of all unemployed people between 50 and 64 have been out of work for a year or more, compared with 33% for those aged 18-24.

5.Both versions of *50+ Works* include case studies providing valuable insight into strategies that have proven successful in helping people get back into work. The case studies complement advice on how to apply for jobs, setting up a business, gaining qualifications and how to overcome barriers holding people back from working.

Please find photos with the following captions attached:

1) "All smiles at the launch of TAEN's new guide" – from left to right – Chris Ball, Chief Executive of TAEN; Rt Hon Esther McVey MP, Minister of State for Employment; Roy O'Shaughnessy, Chief Executive of Shaw Trust

2) "Take off: TAEN launches new guide to help older jobseekers"

About TAEN

TAEN is a network of member organisations with an interest in age and employment issues. Our members are drawn from across the labour market.

TAEN works with individuals and organisations, including government agencies, academic bodies, employers and unions.

For more information, please visit TAEN's website here: http://taen.org.uk/about

About Shaw Trust:

Shaw Trust is a national employment, learning and skills charity that helps people facing disadvantage into work, gain skills and take control of their futures. Over the past thirty years, the Trust has striven to combine its charitable heart with its commercial brain to provide the very best support to the people it was set up to serve.

Shaw Trust is the largest third sector contractor for Department for Work and Pensions. We deliver both mainstream (Work Programme) and specialist (Work Choice) employment support schemes across Britain and help over 50,000 people per year. As well as being a subcontractor in six contract package areas, Shaw Trust, through its merger with Careers Development Group (CDG) is a prime provider in London East has now supported 11,150 people into long-term jobs since the Work Programme began, ranking 12th out of 40 contracts nationally in Year 4 so far.

With regards to Work Choice, Shaw Trust is a prime provider of 16 Work Choice contracts, and a subcontractor in seven Work Choice contract package areas. The latest official statistics from November 2014 show that nationally 78,750 people have started the programme since it started in 2010, with 29,520 of these having found a job. Shaw Trust has supported 18,310 people into work, representing 39.7% of the people starting on the programme.

The Trust also helps people gain skills and into work via a wide range of other activities including education and skills contracts, 50 shops and a national volunteering programme as well as health and social enterprise projects.

Shaw Trust, an approved academy sponsor, created Shaw Education Trust, a multi-academy trust, to manage and run the academies - serving young people with special educational needs or those in disadvantaged communities.

Shaw Trust has a turnover of over £107m a year and employs over 1,438 people across over 200-plus locations. We are supported by over 600 volunteers and deliver contracts for eight major funding agencies including the European Social Fund, the Department of Work and Pensions and the Big Lottery Fund. It has a range of international partners in Australia (Interwork), Poland (Intergracja Foundation) and Romania (Motivation Romania).

Watch the latest Shaw Trust corporate video showcasing who we are and what we do here: http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk/about-us/corporate-video/. For more information, please visit the Shaw

Trust website: http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk`

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