

# Tackling Digital Ageism: Practical Action



Comisiynydd  
Pobl Hŷn  
Cymru  
Older People's  
Commissioner  
for Wales

As highlighted throughout the Commissioner's webinar, digital ageism creates a range of issues and barriers for older people, leaving them at significant risk of exclusion and discrimination in an increasingly digital world.

We all have a role to play in tackling digital ageism, so it's really important we take action to ensure older people's rights are protected and that they can access the services and support they need to live and age well.

Using the findings of the Commissioner's Exploring Digital Ageism report, we've pulled together some suggestions for practical action that will help you to address some of the issues we've discussed today.

## DESIGN AND DELIVER DIFFERENTLY

*Why? Older people are often excluded from co-design, leading to inaccessible services.*

- Involve older people from the start in service design and testing
- Avoid 'one-size-fits-all' design that might favour younger users
- Make sure you're getting the basics right, e.g. readable text, good contrast, simple navigation, compatibility with assistive tech and slower connections

## CHALLENGE ASSUMPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES

*Why? Stereotypes and assumptions reduce opportunities for participation and negatively influence decision-making.*

- Recognise diversity of older people – not a homogeneous group.
- Avoid assumptions that older people are 'not interested' or unwilling or unable to engage
- Be mindful of 'compassionate ageism' (over-simplifying or restricting choices)

## PREVENT BIAS AND IMPROVE FAIRNESS

*Why? Older people are often underrepresented in data used to train AI models, leading to biased outcomes.*

- Avoid relying on datasets that underrepresent or exclude older people
- Ensure transparency where AI is used to support decision-making
- Ask suppliers:
  - Is age considered in data and testing?
  - Has the system been audited for bias?

## ENSURE AGE IS VISIBLE IN TESTING AND EVALUATION

*Why? Older people are often underrepresented in testing and usability data, meaning age-related barriers go unseen and unaddressed.*

- Ensure diversity of older people's skills / experience is reflected in user testing (not just digitally confident)
- Test services in real-world conditions (e.g. assistive tech, varied environments)
- Analyse user data by age to identify hidden barriers
- Avoid generalising (e.g. applying findings from younger users to all age groups)

## EMBED INCLUSION IN EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

*Why? Older workers face systemic barriers in recruitment and training.*

- Audit recruitment tools and AI for age bias
- Remove exclusionary job language
- Provide ongoing, role-specific digital training

## Find out more...

The Commissioner's Examining Digital Ageism Report provides more information about the wider action she is calling for from the Welsh Government and public bodies, as well as further detail on the issues covered during the webinar: <https://olderpeople.wales/resource/digital-ageism/>



# OLDER PEOPLE'S COMMISSIONER FOR WALES

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales is an independent voice and champion for older people throughout Wales.

**The Commissioner wants Wales to lead the way in empowering older people, tackling inequality and enabling everyone to live and age well.**

## Get in touch...

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales  
Cambrian Buildings  
Mount Stuart Square  
Cardiff  
CF10 5FL

Phone: 03442 640 670

Email: [ask@olderpeople.wales](mailto:ask@olderpeople.wales)

Twitter: [@talkolderpeople](https://twitter.com/talkolderpeople)

Website: [www.olderpeople.wales](http://www.olderpeople.wales)

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