

# Ageing and Work: What's inequality got to do with it?

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## **New Deal 50plus: Sustainability of Employment**

**Report**

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Prepared for:

The Department for Work and Pensions

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Retirement age

# Raising UK state pension age to 71 would bring 'misery' to millions

**Ex-pensions secretary and other critics of proposal warn it 'favours the well-pensioned' and higher paid**

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## Ageing and inequalities – some observations from ‘Supporting Healthy Ageing at Work’ and previous projects

- State pension age rises and welfare retrenchment
- Healthy life-expectancy stalled, or in decline
- Inequalities:
  - In health
  - In importance of physical requirements to do job
  - In autonomy at work
  - In ability to exit work voluntarily
  - In resources to cushion insecurity in employment
  - In household circumstances and support
- Importance of life course influences

# A tale of two handymen and 'new' inequalities

- Sam and Paul both made redundant, both became self-employed handymen
- Sam (age 68):
  - “I can't afford to stop [working].... Which at 68 is a pretty depressing prospect... Physically, I don't know how much longer I can keep on doing it [but] ...it's difficult to turn work down... hard physical work [and] I'm going to have to take it for financial reasons”.
- Paul (age 59):
  - “What I'd always enjoyed doing in my earlier life...was to do DIY work, and so I've built a bit of a handyman business now.” He does: “little jobs that I enjoy doing... It's definitely a lifestyle choice that I want to work less and have less pressure on me and just get a better work life balance”.

# Ageing, work and inequalities: Some future areas?

## Work-related Inequalities in....

- Experiences of navigating work in the context of extended working lives
- Relationship between paid and unpaid work (volunteering, caring etc. etc.)
- Influences of gender, ethnicity, and other characteristics
- How work is organised and supported (or not) at a household level
- Technological change on work in later life
- Within the region...