QUIETROOM

Engaging deskless members

Summary of our 2026 report

Helping members make the most of their workplace pension can be challenging at the best of times. But when those members work in factories or supermarkets, drive buses or lorries, climb pylons or dig holes, how can you get through to them at all?

In July 2026, Quietroom gathered a group of 9 pension scheme managers and trustees from a range of large single trust schemes. All 9 had a large number of members who do not sit at a desk all day.

They generously shared what was working for them and what wasn’t. And we threw in what we’ve seen working in other schemes.

Between us we covered a huge amount of ground, and we've pulled the discussion into a report containing 37 practical ideas across 8 themes.

Here's a flavour of what's in the report.

1. Reaching people where they are

Face-to-face contact works better than almost anything else, but it's not always possible at scale. The group talked about using channels staff already check for other reasons, such as shift-pattern apps or noticeboards, rather than asking people to log into something new just for pensions. There were also ideas about working with trade unions, building pensions questions into other staff processes, and setting sensible defaults for digital versus paper communication.

2. Building trusted local contacts

A recurring theme was the value of a trusted person on site that members already go to with questions. The group discussed how to recruit these people, what to ask of them, how to help them give valuable answers, and how to weigh up spending budget on people versus spending it on another app.

3. Making the message land

Short, visual, plain messages beat long ones. The group shared examples of framing pensions around what someone gets rather than how a scheme works, timing communications for moments when people are already curious, and using language that signals something new.

4. Fitting into the wider employee calendar

Pensions content lands better when it's attached to a moment people are already paying attention to, rather than sent as a stand-alone update. The group discussed the difference between planned, business-as-usual communication and the more intensive kind needed for a big change, such as a scheme closure or administrator switch.

5. Reducing confusion in complex schemes

Large organisations often run more than one section or scheme, and members get confused about who to contact. The group discussed ways to make this clearer, including giving each part of a scheme its own identity, building a single point of entry for members, and briefing reps properly so they don't pass on the wrong information.

6. Using AI and data well

AI tools came up a lot. The general view was that generic AI gives generic answers, and the real value comes from tools that know who the member is, using workforce data to tailor what they show. The group shared examples of this working well, and where it currently falls short for shift-based staff.

7. Tackling the emotional barrier

Fear and embarrassment stop people engaging with pensions far more than lack of interest does. The group discussed how to design communications that lower this barrier, how to use plainer language, and how most members really just want one specific question answered rather than a full engagement campaign.

8. Measuring what works

Engagement measures like open rates or posters going up don't tell you much. What matters is whether something has changed in what people do, know or feel, and reviewing take-up before repeating an initiative rather than assuming it worked.

If you'd like the full list of 37 ideas, get in touch and we'll send it over.