

Campaign!

The NPC's monthly bulletin for activists in the pensioners' movement

Better pensions for all generations

Raising the state pension to 70% of the living wage (outside London) will give today's and tomorrow's pensioners a better income in retirement, according to new research from the NPC.

Such a move would give older people a basic state pension of around £10,000 a year compared to the £6029 they get currently for a full pension.

Given that many older women don't even get that, the move would improve the lives of millions of older people and establish the idea of a living pension for all.

The demand for a campaign to improve the state pension is also being debated at this year's TUC conference.

Ron Douglas, NPC president said: "Decent occupational pensions are in decline and auto-enrolment is unlikely to deliver huge payouts for future retirees, which is why the need for a higher state pension becomes increasingly important, not only for today's pensioners, but for future generations as well."

Older People's Day
A living state pension for all generations

Recently there has been a suggestion that older people have escaped the austerity measures at the expense of the younger generation. Not only is this idea divisive, but it is also factually incorrect. In reality, one of the biggest issues facing all generations is the need for a decent state pension in retirement.

What is the current situation?

- The UK state pension is just £115.95 a week and is ranked 36th out of 37 OECD countries
- Over 6m older people live on less than £10,500 a year and 1.9m are living below the official poverty line
- The poorest pensioners tend to be women, single people and the over 80s
- The new state pension that comes into force in April 2016 will force future pensioners to pay more, work longer and get less

What can be done?

- Both today's pensioners and future pensioners need a state pension that can take them out of poverty and rise each year in line with the real costs of living
- A living state pension of £192 a week / £10,000 a year would start to give people dignity and financial security in retirement
- There is plenty of money in the UK pension system, but it currently is unfairly distributed towards the better off. This must change

NPC
 NATIONAL PENSIONERS CONVENTION

Thousands of these leaflets will be distributed on 1 October at events across the UK
 © NPC

Concern over BBC and free TV licence

The NPC is to meet the BBC over plans to pass responsibility for the free TV licence for the over 75s from the Department for Work and Pensions to the broadcaster.

Given the financial pressure the BBC is under, there is a con-

cern that the concession will be either cut or weakened in the future as the corporation tries to save money.

It also raises serious questions as to why a part of wider government social policy should be passed over to a non-elected

body.

The BBC Trust has also launched an online survey asking for views which you can fill in at <https://consultations.external.bbc.co.uk/bbc/tomorrows-bbc> until 18 Sept.



National Pensioners Convention

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Campaign Dates

For What It's Worth
This new NPC pamphlet explains how the new state pension system will work in 2016 and what needs to be done to make it fairer. Priced £1 plus p&p; it is essential reading, especially for those currently at work!

UN Older People's Day

1 October: The NPC will use this event across the country to highlight the need for a living state pension. A national leaflet will be produced and groups are advised to start making plans to mark the event with street stalls, public meetings or protests.

NPC Lobby of Parliament

4 November: 1-3pm, Committee Room 14, House of Commons. Rally looking at pensions and care. Speakers to be announced. Details to follow.

Cuts in care can lead to abuse and neglect

Cuts are putting care under "stress and strain", according to the chief inspector of adult social care in England.

The Care Quality Commission boss, Andrea Sutcliffe said that funding cuts meant that carers were overworked and undervalued.

As a result, Ms Sutcliffe said they might leave the profession or end up becoming "the sort of care worker that you wouldn't

want them to be."

Since 2010, adult social care budgets have been cut by £4.6bn - a 31% reduction in overall funding, and according to a Freedom of Information request by the Observer newspaper, there were 30,000 allegations of abuse in the social care system in the first six months of the year.

This is double the number recorded in 2011.

In 57% of cases in care homes, it

was a professional carer who was the alleged abuser.

Jan Shortt, NPC vice president said: "The NPC's dignity code is clearly needed right across the care sector if we are going to improve the way in which older people are treated."

On 1 February 2016, the NPC will be campaigning across the UK as part of Dignity Action Day and calling for the dignity code to be introduced in all care settings.

It's about inequality, not young versus old

Young people's falling long-term economic prospects are not down to older people in society hoarding all the wealth, according to new research from the TUC.

The findings show that increased university tuition fees, unemployment, poorer job opportunities, lower pay and rapid house price inflation are the real causes of hardship amongst the young.

The report entitled *Young against old?* also shows that pensioners do not comprise the majority of the UK's wealthiest households, as these tend to be those aged between 45-65.

There are also wide variations in income within age groups - with 6% of over 75s being in the top income bracket - and the same number also being amongst the very poorest.

Restricting pensioner expenditure

by the state would also do little to address the difficulties young people face.

For example, means-testing the winter fuel allowance would have little impact on intergenerational inequality.

Dot Gibson, NPC general secretary said: "We must oppose those who try to divide the generations and instead point out that young and old should work together to oppose austerity."

Minister too busy to meet

Newly appointed pension minister, Baroness Ros Altmann has told the NPC she is too busy to meet to discuss our concerns over pension matters.

She has also declined an invitation to speak at the NPC's lobby of Parliament on 4 November.

Given the serious concerns surrounding the future of indexation, the unfairness of the new state pension, the impact of the new pension freedoms and auto-enrolment the NPC will continue to try and meet the minister.

One of the things in Ms Altmann's in-tray that might be taking her

time is the confusion over her political affiliations.

It has been revealed that she has been serving as a Conservative peer and minister whilst also being a member of the Labour party.

She has since been expelled from Labour, but it still leaves red faces all round.

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