

Campaign!

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

Lobby for better care and pensions

Pensioners from across the country will gather next month in Westminster for the annual NPC lobby of Parliament.

Top of the campaign agenda are the issues of care and pensions, but there will also be speakers covering the need for solidarity between the generations, how to defend meals on wheels services and the campaign against austerity.

Neither the new pension minister, Baroness Altmann or the care minister, Alistair Burt have agreed to attend, but the newly appointed shadow pension minister, Nick Thomas-Symonds has agreed to speak.

The line-up of speakers also includes Neel Rada, National Association of Care Catering, Rebecca Winson, GMB young member, Kelvin Hopkins MP and PCS general secretary, Mark Serwotka.

Ron Douglas, NPC president said: "There will be a lot of newly elected MPs who need to understand the concerns of older people, particularly on the key issues of care and pensions."

"This lobby gives us a chance to get our message across that the status quo just won't do."

NPC LOBBY 4 NOV



CARE AND PENSIONS

- **Assemble** 11.30am Old Palace Yard (opp House of Lords)
Speeches and demo
- **Rally/Lobby** 1-3pm Committee Rm 14 (House of Commons)
Speakers to be confirmed

SOCIAL CARE
Our care system has collapsed. Widespread rationing of services, low paid staff and poor standards of care have all caused the crisis. Everyone now accepts that health and social care need to be integrated. This could be achieved with the creation of a National Health and Care Service, funded through taxation and free at the point of use.

PENSIONS
The UK pension system is totally inadequate to deliver a decent standard of living in retirement to everyone. The state pension is among the worst in Europe, occupational pensions are in decline and the new state pension system will mean future generations have to work longer, pay more and get less. We need a living state pension that takes everyone out of poverty and gives them dignity in retirement.

For more information contact:

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The NPC's annual Lobby of Parliament provides an excellent opportunity to meet MPs face-to-face and raise issues of concern
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Corbyn's Older People's Commission

Newly elected Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn has announced that he is to set up an Older People's Commission to look at funding options for better pensions and care.

In an article for the Daily Tele-

graph, Mr Corbyn said there was a need to have a flexible retirement age rather than one single date and for the NHS and social care to be properly integrated.

He also recognised that "dignity for all in old age has to be paid for", and hence the pro-

posal to set up a new commission.

The NPC has welcomed the idea and is keen to play an active part in putting forward its own views on how improved care and pensions can be financed in the future.



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. For speakers see front page article.

Women big losers in new state pension

New official figures shows that of the first 1.2million people to claim the flat-rate pension, only 80,000 women will receive the full amount.

The discrepancy is partly due to an increase in the women's state pension age – which is rising in line with men's by 2018 – as well as the fact more women take career breaks to raise children.

The situation is further complicat-

ed by the fact that an individual currently needs 30 years' worth of national insurance contributions or credits to get a full state pension, but after April 2016 that will rise to 35 years.

It means that someone who has 31 years of contributions today, for example, would get the full amount if they were to retire now, but if their retirement date was in May next year, they wouldn't.

Increasing the

number of qualifying years is likely to mean more women miss out on the full payout as they typically have gaps in their employment.

Worrying figures from the World Health Organisation also show life-expectancy for British women is the second lowest in western Europe; ranked as 14th out of 15.

Experts says a girl born in 2010 would therefore expect to live to 82.7 years in Britain.

Never had it so good?

Every week, at least one story appears in the media claiming that older people—and particularly the “baby boomer” generation have never had it so good; enjoying final salary pension schemes and property wealth.

The latest attack, in the Guardian claims the “grey pound” is worth £320bn a year, and paints an unrealistic picture of life for pensioners in 21st century Britain.

In contrast, a range of new data shows that only 48% of baby-boomers own their property outright and nearly a quarter are renting.

Nearly 2m of those aged 55-64 do not have any private savings and 42% have a long term illness.

Dot Gibson, NPC general secretary said: “There's been a lot of nonsense about a war between the generations, when the real difference is between the rich and the rest of us.”

NICE veto on “flying” social care visits

Care workers should stop spending as little as five minutes with the hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people who rely on their help and stay for at least half an hour, government advisers are urging.

Staff who undertake social care visits to 470,000 older people every year must spend 30 minutes helping to keep them well, said the National Institute for

Health and Care Excellence (Nice).

In its first ever guidance on social care, Nice says that contracts that local councils in England sign with social care providers should allow workers time to provide a good-quality service, including having enough time to talk to the person and their carer, and to travel between appointments.

But council leaders have already said the guidance

cannot be delivered without additional funding from central government.

The chancellor will give his Comprehensive Spending Review on 25 November, but it is unlikely he will reverse the £4.2bn cuts that have already been made to social care since 2010.

The NPC believes its call for a tax-funded National Health and Care Service is now the only answer to the care crisis.

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