

Campaign!

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

TV Licence fight goes to Downing Street



On the 1st August, NPC and supporters from other campaign groups gathered outside 10 Downing Street London to hand in a petition with 634,334 signatures, demanding that the government keep the over-75 TV licence and take back the responsibility for funding the concession
© Age UK

Hundreds of thousands of people across the UK have demonstrated how strongly they feel about the BBC's decision to means test the over 75s TV Licence from June 2020.

One of the largest petitions ever delivered to Downing St, 634,334 signatures, demanding that **the government keep the over 75 TV licence and take back the responsibility for funding the concession.**

In July Age UK delivered 37,000 letters to the Tory Party's Westminster

headquarters urging the various MPs fighting to become Prime Minister to promise to reverse the move, if elected.

Jan Shortt NPC General Secretary said, "The Government has chosen to sub contract its responsibilities for Social Policy to the BBC. We would urge the government to return this essential public service to where it rightly belongs.

"It must be remembered that for many older people the TV is their essential, sometimes only contact with the outside world, and many of whom

have income only just exceeding the Pension Credit limit."

In response to NPC enquiries the BBC have stated that they believe Pension Credit is the best method for Means Testing the Licence fee and that for those just above Pension Credit it is for Government to determine the threshold.

The BBC acknowledge that older people prefer face to face or telephone contact and have said they will strengthen the call centres and the Licensing department with extra fully trained staff in

order to assist those struggling to make Concessionary applications or even to complete payment documentation. The additional staff will not in any sense be Enforcement Officers.

The NPC further understands that easy payments will be introduced with an average payment of around £3 per week. Licence renewal will be on an annual basis. For exemption the Pension Credit receipt will only be required every five years.

Continues overleaf...



NPC

Marchmont
Community Centre,
62 Marchmont St,
London WC1N 1AB.
T: 020-7837-6622
E: info@npcuk.org
W: npcuk.org
Facebook: @NPCUK
Twitter: @NPCUK

Dates for the diary

**NPC Transport
Conference -
Getting About As
You Get Older**
**Wednesday 18 Sep-
tember 11:30-
15:30**, St Aloysius
Hall, 20 Phoenix
Road, London NW1
1TA. Tickets £10 inc
lunch. (cheques re-
turned no later than
16 September)

Consultations

Fuel poverty
strategy for
England
16 September

Select Committee on
Democracy & Digital
Technologies -
Call for Evidence
20 September

**Older People's Day
2019**

Tuesday 1 October

Equity Release

Equity release re-
fers to a range of
products letting you
access the equity
(cash) tied up in your
home if you are over
the age of 55.

The NPC would like
to hear about your
experiences of equi-
ty release.

Please write or
email us with your
stories.

TV licence fight continued

Ron Douglas, NPC President said, "This campaign is ongoing and long-term. Despite these detailed plans we do not accept that any charges at all

NPC should be made. The government should get round the table with the BBC and sort this out. Each blaming the other only adds to the concerns that old-

-er people caught in the middle have about losing this essential concession."

Many pensioners across the country reacted angrily to the withdrawal of this concession with many saying they will refuse to pay.

The NPC has sought legal advice on the matter and will be producing a briefing paper once the research of the information on the processes if TV licence enforcement is completed.

You can still help by writing to your MP or tweeting the Prime Minister.

Tax Outrage !!

Britons reaching state pension age pay most tax for least benefits. On average those born in the 1950s paid £3,000 a year more in tax than they received in benefits at ages 25 to 34. This compares with those born in the 1980s who paid £1,100 a year more in taxes than they received in benefits.

This is on top of the Pension Credit situation with more than one million pensioners living in poverty while the Government receives billions of pounds. Around £7 billion of Pension Credits have gone unclaimed since 2017, meaning that some of the most vulnerable older people are missing out on around £49 a week.

Work 'til 75

The Centre of Social Justice released a report suggesting government increases the State Pension Age to 70 by 2028 and to 75 by 2035 to "help boost the UK economy." The think tank said evidence suggests the UK is "not responding to the needs and potential" of an ageing workforce - with hundreds of thousands of people aged 50-64 deemed "economically inactive".

Jan Shortt, NPC general secretary said "the proposal would make things worse for younger generations, as changes made in 2016 already require them to work longer while paying more in national insurance contributions until they reach pension age."

She added "The UK is the 5/6th richest economy in the

world; has the least adequate state pension of 37 economically developed countries with just 5 wealthy families in the UK holding more wealth than the combined wealth of 12 million others. Longevity is actually falling after a period of stability and to force people to work until 75 is unacceptable. It is about how well you can live your life as you age."

"Older people contribute economically to the country even though they are not in work. We already know that the largest age group of unemployed is those over 65 - and they are too young to claim their state pension, and deemed too old by many employers for a job."

"This is not how a society should act in the 21st century."

Payment Services Directive 2

In a bid to reduce the ever escalating number of fraudulent payments and activities, changes to some online payments, as a result of EU Payment Services Directives 2 (PSD2), are coming in to force on 14th September 2019.

PSD2 aims to improve consumer protection, make payments safer and more secure and drive down the costs of payment services.

Banks will require you to use your mobile phone to validate online payments. Banks are telling customers to confirm online card payments by entering a unique security code sent by text message or via push notification if you have the mobile banking app.

If online shoppers spend more than about £27 (€30 under the EU directive) in one

transaction, payment providers will be required to ask for an extra form of verification, usually sent as a one-time password by text to your mobile phone. The same will apply once you have spent £90 in total on a particular card.

Whilst the NPC believe that PSD2 is good in principle - almost five million people aged 65 and over believe they have been targeted by scammers - there are practical and technological concerns about the ease of use of PSD2 for older and disabled people.

Thousands of people who don't own a mobile phone and even those who can't get signal at home face being frozen out of internet shopping as online payments over the PSD2 limit will require further verification by text.

Sign a friend
up to receive
copies of the
Campaign!
E-Bulletin
- simply
send an
email to:
info
@npcuk.org
or
follow us on
Facebook
and Twitter.