



# Campaign!

Fighting for the rights of older people

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## Paul's 'Four Notes' raise over £1m for Alzheimer's charities



Pic: Music for Dementia

**P**aul Harvey won fans across the UK and earned a £1 million for Alzheimer's charities with a piece of music he composed from just four notes. The Sussex 80 year old was diagnosed with dementia last year, but has continued to be able to play piano and compose music. His son Nick decided to video Paul improvising a piece from four random notes and posted the result on the internet. The clip went viral and the performance was aired on Radio 4 for World Alzheimer's Day in September. Paul was invited to record the piece with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and it was released as a charity single. Billionaire Sir Tom Hunter loved it so much he gave £1million to Paul's chosen charities, the Alzheimer's Society and Music for Dementia. \*Buy the track for 99p: [www.amazon.co.uk/Four-Notes-Pauls-Tune/dp/B08LZ99DHY](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Four-Notes-Pauls-Tune/dp/B08LZ99DHY)

## Vaccine hope—but we're not out of the woods

**C**are home staff and residents will be among the first to be offered the new vaccine against Covid-19 which was announced this week (November 9). Health Secretary Matt Hancock says the NHS and the military are ready to start rolling out the vaccine, developed by US pharmaceutical firm Pfizer, before Christmas, providing it gets final approval by UK medical regulators. But he added: "We still appeal for people's patience, and to follow existing rules, because this is still a deadly disease and it is not over." The government has ordered enough vaccine for 20million people. Studies suggest it can protect 9 out of 10 people from catching Covid. A priority list of who should be vaccinated first has already been drawn up. NHS staff and everyone over 80 will be inoculated after care homes. Over 75s will follow, then over-70s. **NPC General Secretary Jan Shortt welcomed the news: "We hope the government keep their promise to vaccinate the oldest and most vulnerable first."**

## Lockdown Round Two

**D**espite the good news on a Covid vaccine, the second lockdown still runs until 3rd December. This time the rules allow people who live in single adult households to join together with one other person to form a support bubble, without social distancing. You're also able to visit a vulnerable person to provide care or support. For more information visit: [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

## BBC boss wants further NPC consultations after first meeting

**T**he BBC will meet with the National Pensioners Convention to better understand issues around a raft of concerns affecting the UK's oldest and most vulnerable. The NPC will start to brief BBC Policy executives later this month on our views on the state pension and the role the threshold for pension credit has in determining who gets universal entitlements such as the free TV licence. The BBC also wants to discuss how its policy on diversity and inclusion can include older people, and the impact of loneliness, isolation and ageism. **The move follows an initial meeting between BBC Director General Tim Davie (right), BBC Director, Policy Clare Sumner, and NPC General Secretary Jan Shortt, who made a case for reinstatement of free**

TV licences for all over 75s, outlining the financial hardships many currently face. Jan Shortt said: "The meeting with the BBC was robust on both sides - there are still 1.4 million over 75s who have not paid their licence, because they are often financially struggling to do so. However, we welcome the BBC's willingness to continue a dialogue with us, particularly on poverty, isolation and loneliness." The NPC believes the free TV licence is the responsibility of the government, along with other universal entitlements such as free bus passes and the heating allowance, and will now be writing to the government and all MP's as part our campaign to protect them.



## NPC to host webinar on human rights after shock report

The NPC is to hold an online summit on the human rights of older people following a shock report into the deaths of tens of thousands during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Amnesty's investigation into what happened in our care homes found that Do Not Resuscitate signs (DNRs) were issued for some elderly patients without consultation.

The NPC webinar on 3rd December will include a presentation by the Amnesty authors of: 'As If Expensible: The UK Government's Failure to Protect Older People in Care Homes during the COVID-19 Pandemic.' They will be joined by a senior aca-

demically investigating hate crime legislation, and the Commissioner for Older People in Northern Ireland.

Jan Shortt, NPC General Secretary said: "The human rights of older people sadly played very little part in the first lockdown. As we move into winter where cold-related deaths are monitored, we must also ask the government to ensure checks and balances are put in place to confirm that all DNRs have been fully consulted on, and that they will be reviewed regularly after the date of signing."

Full details of the NPC human rights webinar will be announced shortly on [www.npcuk.org](http://www.npcuk.org)

### Meals on Wheels needs more support to help vulnerable during the pandemic

**N**ovember marks Meals on Wheels Week and the 77th anniversary of the iconic service which delivers hot food to older people.

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen a huge increase in the need for isolated older people to receive a hot meal. But with government funding cuts leading to less than 42% of local authorities still offering Meals on Wheels, there has been a big drop in provision. Thankfully many local community groups around the country are stepping up to help, like The Bevy community pub in Brighton, *pictured right*, which received an online visit by HRH Duchess of Cornwall, a supporter of Meals on Wheels. Praising these community groups, Neel Radia of the National Association of Care Catering (NACC), which leads on Meals on Wheels Week at the start of November urged the government to do more to help local authorities and other providers continue the much valued service.



He said: "Meals on Wheels ensures the vulnerable in our communities, who often can't get out, can get nutritious meals delivered to their homes. We must not forget that for some, this is also the only time they see someone, as they may be living alone in isolation. However, the service is shrinking across the UK due to government funding cuts and in our last report 18 months ago, less than 42% of local authorities still offered it, with further closures due this year."

NPC General Secretary Jan Shortt commented: "It is so important that the community spirit that is helping people through these hard times is recognised. But just as important is the government's role in supporting every citizen in need. We intend joining forces with the NACC to get the very important Meals on Wheels service back on the agenda."

### Has your MP read Cinderella?

**T**he NPC has sent every MP in the country a copy of our policy booklet, *Goodbye Cinderella: A New Settlement for Care Service's* – now we would like to know if they have read it, and more importantly if they agree with it!

We are asking all our members and supporters to write to their local MPs and ask for their opinions on the proposals in the document, which include the establishment of a fully-funded National Care Service, free for everyone at the point of need, and operating alongside and in partnership with the NHS. If your MP supports our proposals, we want to hear about it, and to urge them to lobby the government to enact our recommendations. Copies of a template/sample letter that you can use to write to your MP have been sent out to members. You can also find a copy here: [www.npcuk.org/post/goodbye-cinderella-a-letter-to-your-mp-england](http://www.npcuk.org/post/goodbye-cinderella-a-letter-to-your-mp-england) Remember to let us know if they reply.

If you would like to order a copy of *Goodbye Cinderella* (£2 plus packaging and posting), please email: [info@npcuk.org](mailto:info@npcuk.org)

### Beware of new phone scams

The NPC has received reports of several complex phone scams that try to persuade you to buy phone-related products or services which turn out to be substandard or non-existent. Other scams encourage people to unwittingly make phone calls or texts to premium services, or to sign up to expensive subscription services. We have compiled a list of the most common on our website on the link below [www.npcuk.org/post/scams-beware](http://www.npcuk.org/post/scams-beware) For more information visit the Police Action Fraud site: [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)