

Campaign!

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

Care Green Paper now delayed until Autumn

Back in November 2017, the government announced that it would publish a Green Paper on the future funding of social care in the summer, but just weeks before its publication Jeremy Hunt has now confirmed it will be delayed until the autumn.

As it stands, any changes to the social care system are unlikely to come into force until 2020 - and many in the sector tried to put a brave face on the delay by saying it was better to take time to get the policy right, than simply rush something through.

But the reality is the policy isn't going to be right - however long the delay.

The secretary of state is said to support the introduction of a ceiling and a floor for social care payments - which is the same failed policy the Conservatives announced during the 2017 general election.

This would offer a cap on the amount an individual would have to pay towards their care costs, alongside an amount of wealth in assets or property that



would be protected from being used to pay care bills.

At the moment there is no cap on care costs and only a current floor of £14,500 in England, after which the state will pick up your care charges.

It is also likely that the government will want to include an individual's housing wealth when they are assessed for care in their own home.

Currently housing is exempt from this assessment, but if included it is likely that hundreds of thousands of older people will end up paying more for getting help with washing, dressing or getting out of bed.

Meanwhile, right-wing think tank the Adam Smith Institute has called for winter fuel

allowances, bus passes, free TV licences for the over 75s and the triple lock on the state pension to be scrapped and new Care ISAs to be introduced to allow people to save for their future care needs.

To add insult to injury, the Prime Minister recently promised an additional £20bn for the NHS, but made no mention of social care and its desperate need for funding.

Of course simply throwing money at the many private companies that now provide social care is not a long-term solution, but equally asking older people and their families to use their life savings and sell their homes to pay for someone to look after them is also wrong.

And the public understands this better than many of the politicians.

Research by the Institute for Public Policy Research shows significant support for tax-funded social care which is free at the point of need, and former Prime Minister, Gordon Brown has suggested that National Insurance could again be used to raise more money for services.

MPs on the Local Communities and Health select committees have also recently said the over 40s, including pensioners should pay more tax in order to fund care.

Jan Shortt, NPC general secretary said: "This delay is a devastating blow to millions of older people and their families who are desperate for someone to sort out a fairer way of funding our social care services."

"Our view is that care should be free at the point of need, funded through taxation by society as a whole and of the very highest standards."

The NPC is currently drawing up a detailed policy on care funding.

The long awaited Green Paper on social care funding is likely to be published around the same time as the Budget
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National Pensioners Convention

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Campaign Dates

Marking 10 years of the bus pass
Thursday 6 Sept, 12 noon, St Sampson's Square, York. Guest speakers include Jan Shortt NPC gen sec and Tosh McDonald ASLEF president

Women's Health Seminar

Saturday 8 September, Liverpool. Cost £7.50, open to both working and retired women. To book a place contact the NPC office

Jack Jones' Lecture

Tuesday 11 Sept, Friends Meeting House, Manchester 7pm. Speaker: Rebecca Long-Bailey MP

UN Older People's Day

Monday 1 Oct, NPC regions around the country will be staging activities and events. Please contact the NPC office

An age old problem?

A new report from the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) has found that ageist views are held across the generations, but are most prevalent among millennials (aged 18-34), who have by far the most negative attitudes to ageing of all the age groups.

Almost a third of the public (30%) believe "being lonely is just something that happens when people get old", while a quarter (25%) of 18-34 year olds believe it is "normal" for older people to be unhappy and depressed.

Two in five 18-24 year olds (40%) also believe there is no way to escape dementia as you age.

In order to target the sources of destructive ageist attitudes in society, RSPH is calling for an end to the use of the term "anti-ageing" in the cosmetics and beauty

industry, "age" to be included in the Editors' Code of Practice as a characteristic by which journalists must not discriminate, positive ageing to be promoted within schools and nurseries and care-homes to be combined under the same roof, reducing ageism by bringing generations together.

Ron Douglas, NPC president said: "Of course it's easy to have a very negative view about ageing because lots of older people are having a hard time."

"Many are having to sell their homes or use all their savings to pay for care, our state pension is the worst in the developed world and every year tens of thousands of older people die from cold related illnesses."

"If we want to tackle ageism, we need to start addressing these issues."

Discrimination on trains

Rail bosses have been accused of insulting disabled passengers in a drive to cut delays as they introduce new timetables.

Southern Rail parent company Govia Thameslink has told staff not to help people with reduced mobility on to trains if there is a chance it might delay the service.

The NPC has been promoting a petition condemning the rail company's stance which can be viewed at: <https://www.change.org/p/everyone-allow-disabled-people-freedom-to-travel-on-trains?>

In a related move, the NPC has also written to the secretary of state for transport with concerns over the decision by TransPennine Ex-

press to run trains that would be out of bounds to wheelchair users.

The minister has confirmed that as a result of pressure the company has now abandoned this plan.

Peter Rayner, NPC vice president said: "Older people with reduced mobility and disabled passengers have a right to travel on these services as much as anyone else."

"Various attempts to restrict accessibility have to be challenged, as to do the plans to take the guard off of trains."

The NPC will be staging a one-day conference on accessible transport in September.

Details will shortly be available from the NPC.

Working until you drop

An estimated 23 million people will need to keep working beyond retirement age, according to new research by Canada Life.

The rising cost of living, the decline of many final salary occupational pension schemes and poor returns on savings means that up to three-quarters of British workers simply cannot afford to retire.

Almost half will be over 70 before they can give up work - up

from 37% last year.

By October 2020, the State Pension Age (SPA) will go up to 66 for both men and women before rising to 67 by the end of 2028.

The government is also keen to introduce a SPA of 68 in 2036-8 - seven years earlier than originally planned.

Dot Gibson, NPC deputy general secretary said: "We must fight for future generations to have a decent period of retirement so they can enjoy life, rather than working till they drop."

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