

SE No.5 Branch

***“SENIOR DAYS”***

Magazine

2023

*Hello  
Summer*





Dear All

Welcome to the **Summer 2023** edition of our *“Senior Days Magazine”*. It is good to see – and feel – the warmer weather return.

Our *“Guest Columnist”* for this edition is **Brian Webb** who will enlighten us with his reflections on a life in retirement and we hope you enjoy reading his column as much as we did – which is also a timely reminder for any of our readers who would like to share their own experiences, to get in touch with us so that we can arrange for your *“tales of retirement”* to be published.

Earlier in the year, I wrote to my MP, Jeremy Hunt, in an attempt to gain support for a *“Commissioner for Older People and Ageing in England”* and his response was that the issues were considered by the Cabinet and they felt the various Government Departments covered them off. We clearly need to arrange more campaigning on this issue and I shall be contacting the Labour Party, with the assistance of our Political Officer, **Paul Carpenter**, in the hope to get it written into the Manifesto for the forthcoming General Election.

**The National Pensioners Convention (NPC)** held a face to face Annual Convention in Blackpool at the end of June 2023 which covered a number of subjects including Pensions, Cost of Living, Health & Social Care, Housing and Transport.

There is also mounting pressure on the Government, and rightly so, not to increase the State Pension age to 68 which is because the average healthy life expectancy for men in England is 63.1 and for women it is 63.8 and it is the **Government’s policies** that are impacting on people’s lives. It is also worth remembering that we are Pensioners campaigning for the **younger generation** so that they will hopefully enjoy a better quality of life when they reach retirement age.

It just leaves me to wish you well and hope you enjoy the Summer weather and also find this to be another interesting and helpful edition.

All the Best

Andy Moorey  
**Branch Chair**

It is really important to re-emphasise the importance of maintaining our membership records so, if you are due to move home or have a current re-direction in place, or alternatively, you need to update your Next of Kin Nominee, please contact the Branch Office as we are here to assist you.



Also, remember, to send in your experiences of retirement - including any funny moments you may wish to share with us all.



"Everyone has a story  
to tell"  
What is your story?



Take care, look after yourselves, and I look forward to hearing from you.





*As mentioned in our previous Spring Magazine, we would like to have a Guest Columnist with their “Tales of Retirement” in each edition.*

*Every one of you will have a great opportunity to express your views and experiences on retirement, or indeed you may have a great work experience that could give us all a laugh, so if you wish to be involved, please let me know.*

In this edition, we are honoured that **Brian Webb** has agreed to take the time to write a few words on an extremely important issue that we may all face in our twilight years;

*When I retired in April 2018, I abstained from projects my wife had listed over the last 30 plus years, to be able to enjoy this new period in my life and for 3 months, maintenance and gardening were my pleasures.*

*In September 2018 my wife, Denise, and I set out a plan to improve our home and garden to support us into our twilight years by having a new lawn laid, our patio flattened together with new low maintenance driveway and paths and in 2019, this was all finished and we could finally travel and enjoy life.*

*We were carers and volunteers in a Care Home for Dementia residents from 2015 to 2020, but then the Covid-19 Pandemic struck. The Care Home was closed to all but necessary staff and our dreams, like many of us, were put on hold. We cared for a vulnerable family, took part in woodwork classes, cross-stitching and really making anything to support the NHS and others.*

*I also stayed connected with my old work colleagues to offer support during this unprecedented period and, sadly, we lost a number of our elderly family members and friends in 2020/2021. Funerals were numerous but my plot at the allotment, my garden and workshop kept me busy throughout.*

*I’ve recently joined Hedge and Woodland Conservationists (HAWCS) which is a small group of local conservationists and enthusiasts in East Berkshire who meet regularly, normally on Tuesdays and Saturdays throughout the winter months – September to March - to coppice woodland and hedgelay.*



*It is an autonomous, self-funding group affiliated to the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and to the British Hedgelaying Society.*

*We have been working with Berks & Bucks Council to coppice in the Bracknell area to preserve woodland and wildlife habitats and have been working on the Crown Estate in Windsor where King Charles III is an avid hedge layer, and has also been on site many times previously.*

*If anyone is interested in becoming new volunteers, you are welcome at any time during the season however, as the work can be quite strenuous at times, you do need to be physically fit. You will also need thornproof waterproof clothing and stout footwear.*

*Hours are very flexible and you can stay as long – or as little - as you wish between 10am and 3pm.*

*You will also need to take a packed lunch and your own tea & coffee as it is not provided for you due to Covid-19, but tools and gloves are provided for your use following Covid-19 19 Guidance on Cleaning.*

*Please contact **Chris Kersley, the Club Secretary**, to find out more and to ask about getting involved - his email address is [chris.kersley1167@gmail.com](mailto:chris.kersley1167@gmail.com)*



*In 2022 I started a new woodwork course to improve my joinery skills and my current project is making a doll's house for my granddaughter - including all the furniture!*

*I find working outdoors to be both rewarding and excellent for Mental Health as my retirement is about my enjoyment, my fitness, taking care of my mental health and caring for others.*

*Brian Webb*



*Write to us, call us or email us:*

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# ***"Campaigns Around the Patch"***

After much pressure from the older campaign groups, the Government this year has honoured the Triple Locks.

I suspect with the Election looming in 2024 that the current Government will maintain the Triple Lock again for next year.

I believe it is another important issue to have written into all the major parties Manifesto's come election time.



There are several organisations who are developing the Political Manifesto ready for next year's General Election.

The Branch has written to the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) requesting their assistance to include a commitment to introduce a *"Commissioner for Older People in England"* in the next Parliament.

# ***"Campaigns Around the Patch"***

**No increase in the State Pension age – at least for now!**

**Under the Pension Act 2014, an extension to the State Pension age to 67 was brought forward to take effect between 2026 & 2028 with a further increase to age 68 between 2044 & 2046.**

**Whilst reported elsewhere in this magazine, the longevity of life for members is not increasing but has stalled with healthy years in retirement being at a premium.**

**When you look at the current Royal Mail workforce, it is an ageing one and with the average age of our members being 51, it will not be too many years off before, hopefully, they will be drawing their Pensions. It is vitally important we mount a robust campaign to protect these future Pensioners from being exploited after a lifetime of hard physical work has taken its toll on their bodies and in some cases, members souls.**

**Whilst as Retired Members the State Pension age has no direct impact on us, we need to campaign to protect the future Pensioners like those who came before us.**

**Having done a little more research into the 'Age Addition' payment of 25p per week for pensioners over the age of 80, successive Governments have said they wished to focus additional resources for older people by other means, for example the Winter Fuel Allowance.**

**If you wish to read the full report, you can request a copy from me at the Branch Office.**



# ***"What's Been Happening"***



**Branch Chair**  
Richard Weaver  
**Branch Secretary**  
Andy Moorey  
**Branch Treasurer**  
Dave Young

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Our Ref: 11.00/am/mb

Jan Shortt, General Secretary  
National Pensioners Convention  
Marchmont Community Centre  
62 Marchmont Street  
**LONDON**  
WC1N 1AB

6<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Dear Jan

## **Commissioner for Older People and Ageing: England**

I recently wrote to my MP, Jeremy Hunt, requesting his support for the above position and his response was extremely disappointing.

Mr. Hunt informed me that the Cabinet *"had discussed this issue and came to the conclusion that all of the issues raised in our petition were satisfactorily covered off by the various Government Departments, therefore, this current Government would not be pursuing the creation of a Commissioner in England"*.

I feel it would be a tremendous achievement if the 70 organisations representing over 11 million older people could band together to secure enough signatures (100,000 required) so that the issue can then be debated seriously in Parliament.

It is thought-provoking to note that we have 41 Police Crime Commissioners in England alone - at a cost of over £36 million in wages - yet this Government would attempt to deny the 11 million older citizens in England the right of a voice to be able to challenge and hold accountable our elected representatives on issues that we hold dear; Pensions, NHS, Social Care and Transport to name but a few.

Whilst some Politicians are attempting to block us off, I am sure the NPC working groups are busy behind the scenes putting further pressure on our elected MP's to bring about much needed positive changes. The Political Parties are now finalising their Manifesto's for next years General Election and it would be useful for them to confirm that at least one of their policies is the Election of a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing in England.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andy Moorey', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andy Moorey  
**Branch Retired Members Secretary**

# ***"What's Been Happening"***

RMSPS Members

## **Future Notification of Pension Increases**

The recent edition of the RMSPS Member Newsletter contained an announcement to the effect that from 2024, Pension increase letters will only be available via the online Pension Portal.

In previous years, members have always had the option to receive notifications either via the portal or to receive a "hard copy" by letter.

A meeting has recently taken place with the Cabinet Office who indicated that the number of members using the portal was increasing, however, it was pointed out that many of our members are not "online" or have access to a computer and will therefore still require to receive increase notifications by letter.

There has been no final decision made relating to this matter at present and this issue is ongoing and members will be updated in due course.

**The Winter Fuel Allowance (WFA) has not increased since 2011. In the last years we have seen additional assistance with heating bills, which has included the general population under the Energy Bills Support Scheme.**

**I think it is important to campaign for an increase in the WFA that guarantees not only a regular income during the winter months, but helps to give peace of mind during these difficult times.**



# FRIENDLY REMINDER



**Don't forget that after 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 you will only be able to use the newly designed postage stamps that have the barcodes on them as shown below.**



Royal Mail added a 6 month's grace period to the original deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023, so from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023 you will need to "Swap Out" your non-barcoded stamps for the new ones through their "Stamp Swap Scheme" by completing the appropriate form which can be printed directly from Royal Mail's website at [www.royalmail.com/sending/barcoded-stamps](http://www.royalmail.com/sending/barcoded-stamps) or alternatively, you can call their Customer Experience Team on 0345 774 0740 to request a "Stamp Swap Out Form"

The deadline is fast approaching, so search through all of your drawers and post them off as soon as possible so you don't lose out!



## What is Silver Sunday?

Initially launched by the Sir Simon Milton Foundation as a local campaign to tackle loneliness and isolation, Silver Sunday is now a National Day where people of all generations can come together by hosting fun and free activities for older people.

It is a day where older people can meet new people, visit new places, try new activities and connect with their local communities and the generations around them.

More information about the many events taking place around the Country can be found here: <https://silversunday.org.uk/> or you can contact Lucinda Hurrey, the Project Manager on 07890 380238 or by email at [info@silversunday.org.uk](mailto:info@silversunday.org.uk)

# "Philosophical Quotes Page"

"Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it."

CHARLES R. SWINDOLL



"START BY DOING WHAT IS **NECESSARY**; THEN DO WHAT IS **POSSIBLE**; AND SUDDENLY YOU ARE DOING **THE IMPOSSIBLE**."



SIR FRANCIS OF ASSISI

be like a  
*Sunflower*



*Stand strong, tall  
and follow the sun.*

BE WHO  
YOU NEEDED  
WHEN YOU WERE  
YOUNGER.



”

*Strength grows in the moments when you think you can't go on, but you keep going anyway.*



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