# SE No.5 Branch
# *"Senior Days"*

CWU
RETIRED MEMBERS

# Magazine


# 2026

The communications union

Dear All

Welcome to the Summer 2026 edition of our "Senior Days Magazine". I hope you will find the articles enclosed of interest. As you all know by now, we are always looking for contributions from members of the Retired Section, especially if you are interested in writing a piece as the Guest Columnist.

Myself, Ian and Paul were invited and attended Parliament to meet with Matt Rodda MP for Reading Central. It gave us the opportunity to discuss electing a Commissioner for Old People in England.

One of the Commissioner's responsibilities will be to challenge and demand action from the various Governmental Departments that have responsibilities for older people. As previously reported, we wrote to all MP's whose constituencies cross our Branch boundaries on this matter.

From the responses we have received, it is clear we have some way to go before the Commissioner for Older People becomes a reality. We also discussed the Personal Tax thresholds and how it will impact on future State Pensions. Further updates will be reported in future editions of the magazine.

I hope with the warmer weather and longer days you will be able to go out and about. After what was a long damp miserable winter, spring is here and we have the summer to look forward to too.

If you have any issues that you feel we can help you with, please don't hesitate to contact us at the Branch Office.

***All the Very Best***

Andy Moorey
***Branch Chair***

## *Prostate Cancer Awareness*

**In January this year, after three years of campaigning, NHS England approved Abiraterone for many more men with prostate cancer in England.**

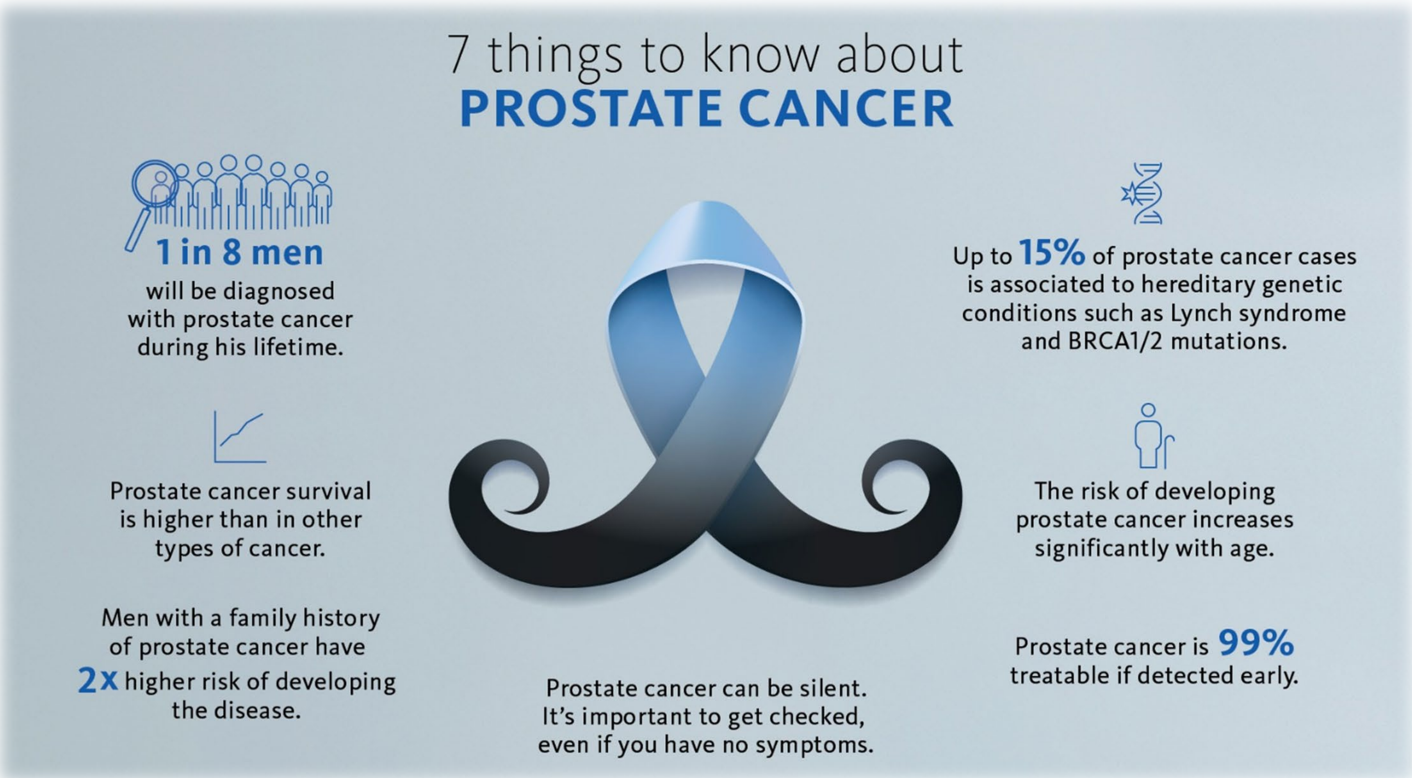
**Campaigners met up in Parliament to celebrate the introduction, this achievement will give men diagnosed with aggressive prostate cancer the best chance of a cure.**

**This significant step forward will help save 3,000 additional lives over the next five years.**

**It is important that we, as men, take responsibility for our own well-being. I am as guilty as the next man for putting off a visit to the Medical Centre and then faced the consequences.**

**We should all be proactive, so don't put off seeking medical support when required. We have all contributed through our taxes to build the National Health Service and when needed it is there for us all.**

**Andy Moorey**



The communications union

Dear All

In 2018 the administration of the Royal Mail Statutory Pension Scheme (RMSPS) which was set up in April 2012, was handed over to Capita.

This company has a poor record, for example some Civil Servants have not been receiving their Pensions since December and Postal Members, at the time of writing, have not been informed of the 2026 increase.

On 22nd April, the Government decided to rescind the extension of Capita's contract and the CWU is seeking talks with the Government to ideally return the administration to Royal Mail, who have informed members of this year's increases in relation to the other Pension Schemes they run.

Royal Mail is continuing to undermine the Customers Service Points (or as most people refer to it the 'Callers Office'). The "Something for You" card left for customers has also changed.

Re-deliveries from ParcelForce can still be dealt with by customers on-line but Royal Mail now only use a QR code on the card. Many people, particularly retirees, do not use QR codes even if they own a smart phone.

So, this means they must phone regarding arranging a re-delivery - a twenty-minute wait when I called – or go to the Caller's Office. The card, however, does not give the opening times which have been cut back in most offices from 8am to 10am with different times being later on some days.

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The communications union

I know from first-hand experience when I visited the Picket Lines during the last Strikes that the number of customers who turned up, some by bus, to pick an item up or Businesses who were dropping items off were unaware the Callers Office was closed. Many more would not have come because they did know it was closed.

Surcharges used to be carried out in Delivery Offices often by Caller's Office staff but are now done in the Mail Centre's where the items can sit for a week or longer because time is not allocated to deal with them.

Royal Mail clearly want to close the Callers Offices because the competition does not have collection bases. It may mean a Campaign like the successful one to stop Network Rail Ticket Office closures if they do.


Which leads me on to the National Pensioners Convention (NPC). Later on in this issue, there is an article on the NPC which has had to restructure due to financial pressures.

Now this has been completed after some months, hopefully there will be more campaigning on the many issues facing retired people.

Ian Warrick

***Branch Retired Members Secretary***




If you find yourself having any issues with your ***Royal Mail Pension Plan***, or your payments have been suspended for any reason, please make sure that you have notified your ***Pension Admin Centre*** if you have moved to ensure that they have your correct address and contact details.

You may also want to check your ***"Expression of Wish"*** nominee is also correct.

**Royal Mail** Pension Plan

For further help and information,
contact the Pensions Service Centre:

pensions.helpline@royalmail.com

0345 603 0043
Mon to Fri, 9.00am to 5.00pm

Pensions Service Centre,
PO Box 5863, SHEFFIELD, S98 6AB




If you find yourself having any issues with your ***Royal Mail Statutory Pension Scheme***, or your payments have been suspended for any reason, please make sure that you have notified your ***Pension Admin Centre*** if you have moved to ensure that they have your correct address and contact details.

You may also want to check your ***"Expression of Wish***" nominee is also correct.

**Royal Mail**
Statutory Pension Scheme

If you need to change any of your Personal Details, wish to Transfer out of the Scheme, want to make a complaint, have any other queries about your Benefits or wish to let them know that a member has recently passed away, please contact their Team – ***who are available between 08:30am and 5:30pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays***) – using the following methods:

**Write**: Royal Mail Statutory Pension Scheme
PO Box 551
Darlington
DL1 9TX

**Email**: enquiries@rmsps.co.uk

**Telephone:** 0333 222 0078

***Please Note:*** **You will need to provide your full name, date of birth and either Your National Insurance Number or Membership Number when contacting them.**

# Current Campaigns

## "Energy Industry Profits"

The higher Standing Charges that all the Utility Companies now generate have become very noticeable over the last couple of years.

OFWat (Water Services Regulation Authority) has placed a price cap on energy bills until July 26. It will help struggling pensioners in some respects, but long term solution needs to be found to support older people during the forthcoming winter months.

We all know these essential services should not have been privatised with shareholders being paid dividends that should have been invested in the Companies infrastructure.

As everybody has noticed, the cost of living keeps rising and when you are on a fixed income, it starts to pinch.

This issue was one of the 2 Motions the Retired Members Conference put forward to the Annual Conference of the CWU to take National Action on and the Motions to Conference can be found elsewhere.

*Further updates will be reported in due course.*

## "Offline & Overlooked"

**We have written to all the MP's in our Branch Area about supporting the older generation with training on I.T. skills and, where necessary, giving additional support and advice lines for those that find it almost impossible to use the technology.**

**There are many day to day activities like banking, NHS appointments & car parking payments that older people have difficulty with online and would rather pay by traditional methods. We will continue to campaign on these issues and help support members during this difficult transitional period.**

*Further updates will be reported in due course.*

# Current Campaigns

## "Winter Fuel Allowance (WFA)"

In the next edition, we will publish the Government advice and criteria to claim this allowance.

There has been some confusion following the Governments U-Turn last Autumn.

## *“ Older People’s Commissioner in England”*

*As you know this campaign is on-going. We have attended Parliament and MP’s surgeries to put forward our case to help support and focus on issues that are important to our members and the wider public. Further details are published elsewhere in this magazine.*

# Tea (or Coffee) Break Time

spring into

## SUMMER WORD SEARCH

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| S | J | L | W | A | E | R | U | P | N | X | T | Z | B | P |
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| BEACH | SWIMSUIT | BOAT | SHELL |
| POPSICLE | LEMONADE | SUNGLASSES | ICE CREAM |
| SUN | TAN | TOWEL | WATER |

# Tea (or Coffee) Break Time

Can you find 10 differences between the pictures?

Commissioner for Older People & Ageing

# Consensus statement on a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing in England

We call on the UK government to establish a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing in England to act as an independent champion for older people and ensure that policy and practice across government considers the long-term needs of people in later life and the implications of our ageing population on society.

Our society is ageing, and policymakers should embrace this demographic shift. Currently 11 million people are aged 65 or over, and in less than 20 years over 17 million (1 in 4) of us will be over 65. Growing older is a privilege, but an ageing population will require collaboration and joined-up thinking to deliver innovative policy solutions and meet the needs of the future, including alternatives to accessing information and services other than online.

The support people need in later life from institutions like the NHS and social care, and social security systems are critical, but no single government department can respond to these issues alone. A commissioner would facilitate the long-term planning that is needed to ensure our economy and public services are adapting to demographic shifts, while also enabling more people to age well. This would not just benefit older people, but our country as a whole.

A sharper focus on the range of experiences in later life is required. Not everyone enjoys a financially secure retirement – indeed an alarming proportion are struggling to make ends meet – and too often, older people's rights and interests are forgotten by decision-makers, particularly as we face unprecedented crises.

But there is an opportunity to fix this. Older people want to be part of the country's vision, now, and in the future. As our older population becomes increasingly diverse, we believe that older people urgently need a champion at the heart of the government, working alongside the Older People's Commissioners for Wales and Northern Ireland, to help make the UK the best place in the world to grow old.

**The supporters of this statement include:**

# Renters Rights Act

While the Renter Rights Act was introduced on 1st May 2026, it will help with many issues renters experience, but sadly it won't help with the growing problem of affordability.

We know how important Housing Benefit is to older renters who receive it. However, due to political choices, Local Housing Allowance (which determines the maximum amount of Housing Benefit a person can receive) has been frozen and this is significantly impacting older renters.

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) has not been updated to cover at least the cheapest 30% of the market during eight of the last fifteen years, meaning private renters have spent years facing stark choices, cutting back on essentials like healthy food and adequate heating, to make ends meet.

New research shows that 37,900 older private renters would be pulled out of poverty if LHA matched actual rates.

We are campaigning on the UK Government to uprate LHA to cover the cheapest 30% of the market and reverse the decision made in the budget last year to extend the current freeze.

***Further updates will be reported.***

# Key Advice for Avoiding Email, Telephone & Text Message Scams

1. Don't respond to ***ANY*** unexpected call, email or text message without checking first. If it's out of the blue, make sure it's really for you;

   - If it's a call, ***hang up***, find a number you can trust and call back on that
   - If it's from ***"your bank"***, you can call them back using the telephone number on the back of your Bank card
   - Or if you're concerned, dial ***159*** to be connected to most UK banks

2. STOP and get a second opinion if you're being forced to make a decision or if you feel rushed;


   - ***No legitimate organisation*** will object to you asking a friend, family member or colleague for an opinion. Nor will it object to you saying no or delaying your decision.

3. Report ***EVERY*** scam, even if it didn't work on you, to help others:


   - Forward suspicious texts to ***7726*** and emails to ***report@phishing.gov.uk***
   - Report fraud directly to the companies involved so they can alert other customers

# SCAM ALERT

**DON'T BE FOOLED**

**It is always important to remain alert to potential scams, and listed below are a few reminders to help safeguard your property and belongings**

## *NEVER move money out of your Bank Account for "Security Reasons"*

It is important to remember that ***criminals will impersonate*** employees from Banks and other trusted Organisations so **ALWAYS** double check all payment requests **BEFORE** sending your money.

If you are unable to check in person at your Bank, always just hang up the telephone and call your Bank on their secure number to notify them that you have had a call.

## *Don't take anything at Face Value if you receive a "Cold Caller" at your door*

Remember, criminals ***expertly*** fake the contact ID's to make it look like they are an employee from a company that you may have heard of so **NEVER** invite them in to your home, **ALWAYS** take their ID and ask them to **WAIT OUTSIDE** and **SECURELY CLOSE THE DOOR** so that you can safely go and call the Company to double check with them that the ***"visitor"*** who is claiming to be from them is genuine, because legitimate companies will always assist you regarding this matter.

## *If you are active online, DO NOT share any of your passwords with anyone*

Bank employees will never ask you for this information, so ensure that you do not do it. It is also ***very important*** to **NEVER** let anyone remotely access your computer or devices. Criminals may ask you to visit a particular website, click on a link or download an app which will give them access to totally control your computer or device to do whatever they want. **ALWAYS** be weary of contact details on payment requests – especially over the internet.

We believe it is important for members to remain vigilant and take your time before responding. **Remember**; if you are asked to rush a payment, be on your guard because it is more than likely a scammer!

## Be Aware & Take Care

# Health & Social Care

The NHS will be one of the most important issues for us over the coming months and years. Now we have an opportunity to demand the kind of NHS we want and deserve after decades of privatisation and cuts to services.

There is a desperate need to change the narrative around the NHS and Social Care. Yes, we need better Budgets for both these services, but these alone will not achieve a return to the NHS we really want. A whole raft of policies needs reviewing and potentially thrown into the bin. Because it is not the NHS that has failed, it is the policies of those in power.

Every time there is a change of Government, there is a *'reform the NHS'* agenda which quite frankly wastes even more money. The National Pensioners Convention (NPC) suspects that removing the NHS and Social Care from the Political Agenda would give stability and growth in the right direction, but that will not happen any time soon.

The NPC policy of a National Care Service free at the point of need would begin to deal with the unacceptable lack of access to even basic care needs. It requires to be fully funded, publicly run and accountable and to give care workers the respect they deserve by having their own Professional Body and pay structure. Our policy demands parity of illness, so that no one must pay exorbitant care costs just because their condition does not meet someone else's criteria.

To be effective, the National Care Service must work alongside the NHS. So, what will that require?

- Public Funding;
- End privately funded services;
- A workforce that is respected and valued;
- Decent pay and conditions;
- A recruitment and retention strategy that enables staffing levels to reach optimum numbers;
- Investment in the infrastructure of hospitals and delivering new, modern buildings for staff to work from;
- Restore Public Health to pre-pandemic levels and enable them to re-build the nation's health.
- Tackling health inequalities will only happen with new policy initiatives that put people first.

If you believe in an **NHS** that is for everyone, use your people power!

# Basic Skin Care Tips As We Age

***Don't forget sunblock:*** always apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) when you'll be in the sun. Apply often and liberally. Use a sunscreen even when you're only going to be in the sun for a limited time. Also protect your skin from the sun's damaging rays by staying out of direct sunlight. Keep to shaded areas whenever possible, and wear sunglasses, a hat, and protective clothing.

***Use mild soaps:*** Many soaps and shower gels are too harsh for aging skin and strip our skin of its natural oils. Liquid soaps that are fragrance-free, moisturizing, and PH balanced are gentler.

***Don't overdo it:*** If you take frequent baths or showers, try cutting back a bit. Wash with warm water instead of hot, use a soft washcloth, and avoid vigorous scrubbing. Pat your skin dry with a soft towel. Always avoid rubbing your skin.

***Moisturise:*** Apply moisturizer regularly everywhere, face and body. Smooth your moisturiser gently over your skin. Don't forget your neck, hands, and feet. There are extra rich and medicated moisturizing lotions, creams, and ointments that can help soothe dry, rough and/or itchy skin. Your doctor can provide recommendations.

***Be wary of products with "anti-aging" ingredients:*** Some contain ingredients that may be too harsh on thinning skin. Test products on a small area of skin and wait to see if there's a reaction. It's wise to use stronger products under the guidance of a doctor or health professional.

***Stay hydrated:*** Drinking plenty of water is important for your skin and body. The human body is mostly water. As we age, the average water content of an adult reduces significantly.

***Use a humidifier in your home:*** It will add moisture to the air, which can be especially helpful for dry, rough, and/or itchy skin.

***Don't overdress:*** Wear clothing that's loose and breathable. Stick to cotton whenever you can and avoid polyester or other synthetic fabrics.

***Check your habits:*** Do not smoke or consume excessive amounts of caffeine and/or alcohol. These habits can affect skin tone, increase wrinkling, decrease moisture, and cause discoloration.

***Eat a well-balanced, healthy diet:*** What you put in your body shows in your skin. Proper nutrition will give you a healthier glow and help keep your skin from looking pasty or sallow.

# "Useful Contacts Page"

What is The Silver Line Helpline?

The ***Silver Line Helpline*** is run by ***Age UK*** and is a free, confidential telephone service for people aged 55 or over who will provide friendship, conversation and support ***24 hours a day, 7 days a week***, especially to those who may be experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation, because everyone needs someone to talk to sometimes.

You can contact them, ***free***, by calling **0800 470 8090**

Get information about your State Pension by contacting the ***Government Pension Service*** that can provide details of state pensions, including pension statements.

They can be contacted, ***free***, by calling **0800 731 7898**

For any assistance with your Royal Mail Pension, you can contact the Pensions Service Centre on:

**0345 603 0043**

They are open Mon to Fri, 8.30am to 5.00pm

The National Pensioners Convention (NPC) is 1 of the campaigning organisation for older people in the UK and you can find more information on the current campaigns by visiting **https://www.npcuk.org** or they can be contacted on **0207 837 6622**

**For the year 2024** Individual Supporters (**on post only**) will get two mailouts a year. Those on email can sign up for e-alerts.

So, if you would like to join to a local group, please contact the NPC office on **info@npcuk.org**



*Write To Us:*

**CWU SE No. 5 Branch**
**The Business Centre**
**12 Chequers Road**
**BASINGSTOKE**
**Hampshire**
**RG21 7PU**

***Call Us:*** **01256 474000**

***Email Us:*** **andymoorey@cwuse5.org.uk**

***Visit Our Website:*** **www.cwuse5.org.uk**