

OPINION: The UK state pension is far too low

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More food vouchers are on their way eligible East Hampshire residents (*Petersfield Post*)

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With all these strikes going on, as justifiable as they are, the strikes are not just about pay. The Tories are also trying to remove fair working conditions,

hard fought for by Unions years ago.

Forty years ago, a huge section of our community, our elderly generation, had their contributory basic State Pension reduced, by the late right wing Tory MP, Margaret Thatcher, when she broke the State Pension link with male average earnings. Today this policy has never been reversed, and this generation cannot strike or down tools, even though they all receive the lowest State Pension in Europe. They have nobody to fight for them, or make certain that they get the media representation, the nurses, railways, or postal workers, are getting.

We are Wake-Up Britain! a social media Facebook group and we have a petition, number 630163 on the Governments web site: we are asking the Government to increase the State Pension to £416.80 pw, and lower the Retirement Age to 60 for All.

This is a modest amount, the National Minimum Wage for forty hours in a country as rich as ours. Britain's State Pension is far too low. The Government must increase the basic State Pension to £21,673.60 a year (£416.80 pw) and extend this to everyone aged 60 or over. This will lift thousands out of poverty, give our elderly folk more spending power, and help grow the real economy, bottom up. £416.80 pw is the National Minimum Wage from April 2023.

We are aware that the government may not honour our petition, and so our main aim is to gain enough signatures to win the media attention our elderly people deserve, to highlight the meagre State Pension in this country, stamping the issue indelibly onto the media map for the first time ever. It's further hoped that all major political opposition parties, will notice, because we are rushing up to a General Election before 2024 is over.

We have today's old, and tomorrow's old, to think about: today's young are tomorrow's old, so protecting the value of the State Pension is defending the future of all, and investing directly into the real economy. Remember

private pensions are expensive and subject to the vagaries of market forces making them insecure, the only secure pension is the State pension, and old age should never be reliant on markets, or be regarded as a "burden", but heralded as something to look forward to after decades of working and paying into the system.

So readers please step forward to sign and share our petition widely, make it gain as close to a million signatures as possible, or well in excess of our former petition that ended recently and gained 111,008 signatures during it's 6 months run. We need to gain the media's attention, we must make certain that our petition is seriously debated in parliament in the face of a government whitewash. We should all want to make sure the petition is eventually forced into statute, some time

Wakeup Britain! (wakeupbritain2021@gmail.com). Angela Templeton, Karen Burns, Dave Fabian, Denver Johnson and Michael Thompson.

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