

Campaign!

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

Clegg attacks pensioner benefits - again

Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg has again reiterated his plans to means-test universal age-related benefits if he is still in government after the 2015 general election.

In a speech to his party's conference Mr Clegg suggested that any pensioner with assets of £1m or more would have their bus pass, winter fuel allowance and other benefits removed.

However, the Lib Dem leader's claim that Sir Alan Sugar should have his bus pass taken away prompted the millionaire entrepreneur to declare that he does not even have a bus pass.

Fellow Lib Dem minister Dave Laws then had to explain that taking benefits away from a tiny number of millionaire pensioners would raise virtually nothing; suggesting that the government would instead have to introduce a complicated and expensive means-tested system that would target all those with an income of more than just £7500 a year.

Dot Gibson, NPC general secretary said: "This issue keeps coming up and Nick Clegg is the latest to start attacking pensioner benefits, but the figures simply don't add up and he knows it."

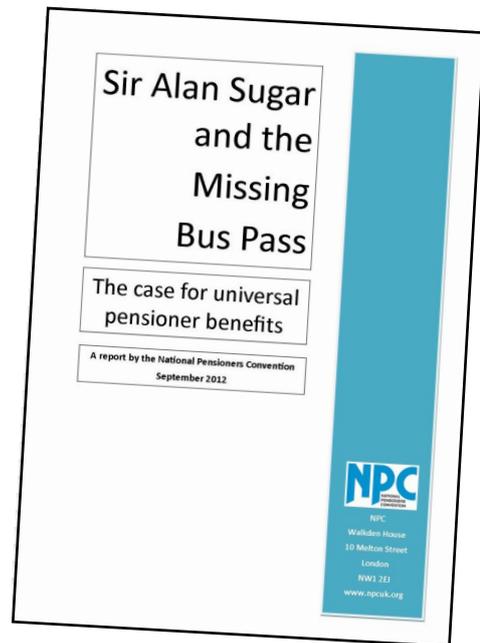
"The Deputy Prime Minister and

others are trying to prepare the ground so that after the election the government can start to dismantle the welfare state."

The NPC has called a national lobby of Parliament on 31 October and is urging pensioners to meet their MPs on the day.

"Mr Clegg should remember that he also receives a number of benefits from the taxpayer, such as a chauffeur driven car and warm accommodation," added Ms Gibson.

"One of the main reasons why pensioners have campaigned for these benefits over a number of years is because the state



pension remains so inadequate and we have absolutely no intention of letting them go," she said.

Research shows that every year older people contribute £40bn to society more than it costs to pay pen-

sions and benefits, through taxes, voluntary work and unpaid caring.

Details of the lobby or copies of the NPC report (pictured above) can be obtained from the NPC office or by visiting www.npcuk.org.

The NPC report "Sir Alan Sugar and the Missing Bus Pass" explains the importance of universal age-related benefits
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A FUTURE THAT WORKS

**SATURDAY OCT 20
TUC DEMO
ASSEMBLE FROM 1PM
AT JCT OF PALL MALL/
PICCADILLY FOR
SHORTER MARCH TO
HYDE PARK
(Nearest Tube: Green Park)
afuturethatworks.org**



National Pensioners Convention

Walkden House,
10 Melton Street,
London NW1 2EJ
T: 020-7383-0388
E: admin@npcuk.org
W: npcuk.org

Campaign Dates

20 October 2012
A Future That Works

A mass march and rally through central London, called by the TUC in opposition to the government's current round of austerity measures. The NPC is supporting the event and is encouraging as many pensioners and their organisations as possible to take part

31 October 2012
Hands off the Bus Pass Rally/Lobby
National event aimed at defending universal pensioner benefits. 11.30am protest opposite Parliament in front of George V's statue, followed at 1pm by a rally in Committee Room 14 and then a lobby of MPs. Please support this important day of action

NPC Pensioners' Parliament 2013
18-20 June, Winter Gardens, Blackpool

Ex-minister warns over care policy

Former care minister, Paul Burstow has hit out at the Treasury claiming that they intend to kick the issue of social care funding into the political long grass.

Mr Burstow lost his post as care minister in the recent government reshuffle, and has since spoken of his concerns.

Some within the Coalition are keen to introduce a life-

time cap on the amount that individuals would have to pay for the care they receive, similar to that proposed by the Dilnot Commission, but feel that this could only be done for those

who take out some form of voluntary private care insurance.

There is also some confusion as to whether the means-tested level at which support can be given will rise from the

current £23,250.

Pat Healy, NPC vice president said: "The government's dithering on the issue of care funding is leaving around a million families in unnecessary limbo."

"We urgently need a National Care Service that everyone pays into through taxation, which can raise standards and end the need for thousands of people to sell their homes."

Campaign to unite the generations

The NPC has officially launched its Generations United campaign with the support of newly elected TUC general secretary, Frances O'Grady, National Union of Students president Liam Burns, author Owen Jones and a host of teaching unions.

The launch statement in the national media states: "At a time of economic crisis, there is often a tendency to look

for someone to blame.

This time a number of politicians, think tanks and elements in the media have started to point the finger at pensioners by suggesting that they have escaped the austerity

measures at the expense of young generations.

Not only is this factually incorrect, it is extremely divisive.

Young and old share a number of concerns; from

the lack of suitable housing and inadequate public transport in rural areas, to raising retirement ages which will mean everyone has to wait to receive their pensions and rising youth unemployment.

What this artificial generational conflict tries to hide is the real division in our society between rich and poor."

More information on the campaign will be issued shortly.

Dignity Code gets backing

The NPC has contacted every local authority in the UK asking them to adopt the Dignity Code, as a way of promoting better care of older people.

Many positive replies have been received so far; with one county council agreeing to put the Code within their contracts and to use it as a way of monitoring that those providing the services are acting properly.

The NPC also intends to ask every MP to add their name as well, and arrangements are being made to

ask the new care minister, Norman Lamb, how he

intends to promote the Code as part of the government's white paper on social care.

Norman Jemison, NPC vice president said: "We need to see the Dignity Code in every hospital ward, care home and GPs' surgery across the country."

If you know of anyone who would like to receive this bulletin please send their email address to the NPC