

STAYING ACTIVE in UNISON

GREATER LONDON REGION RETIRED MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

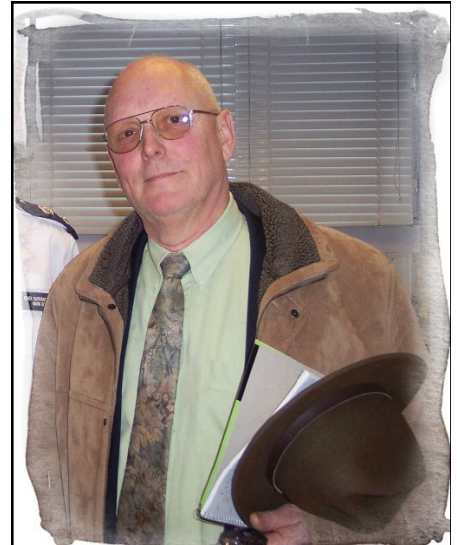
Issue 15. May 2012

Elder Abuse Campaign

The Greater London Retired Members Committee, are running a campaign to get a Law to make **Elder Abuse** in certain cases a **Specific Offence**.

We are asking that if by reason of frailty both mentally or physically, the older person is targeted and it can be shown that the crime was perpetrated because the offender took advantage of this, then it would be an aggravating factor like Race/Homophobic crimes. Therefore it

- **Would have an obligation on Police/Council to investigate.**
- **The Penalty for such an offence would be on a higher scale.**



We have faced an uphill struggle to get MP's, Celebrities, (with the exception of Sir Michael Parkinson, and Tony Robinson,) and Religious Leaders interested, in fact, some have sent outright **Negative Replies!**

Contact has been made with other Retired members committees throughout the Regions. Tony Vass and I have been spreading the word Locally. We have a website asking Parliament to consider this matter and we need over 100,000 signatures on this to get the issue raised in the House.

<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/27208>

Please click on link and sign the petition, every click counts. This campaign is backed by UNISON and it is hoped he can persuade Labour MPs to sign the petition and back it in Parliament. I do not know WHY we are not getting support from those whose voices are listened to by the Public etc, but as I have said many times to Politicians, both locally and Nationally, if it were Legislation to Protect cats and dogs etc, and Children, they would be driven out by the Public backlash. So why not older vulnerable people, We are told that there is a Memorandum of Understanding in the Court system regarding older people, However it is not LAW! IF a Memorandum was sufficient, Why then the need for Laws on Homophobia and Race hate crimes? Please support us, we will continue trying to get our word out by whatever means. Thank you on behalf of our campaign. **Peter HOWARD**

Promoting Our Elder Abuse Campaign—After our success with the stand at the National Delegates Conference [NDC] last June and the Retired Members Conference in October, where we collected well over 1100 signatures, we were delighted to find the smaller conferences this year were in Brighton. This means that if we could have a stand at each one, it was an easy day trip for both Rob Beeston and myself and kept the costs to a minimum. The easy day trip alas on two occasions didn't materialise—usual train problems. It was agreed we could have a stand for what has now become a national campaign. We began with the Black Members conference, closely followed by the Women's Conference. More signatures were collected, we gave out details of our e-petition, blank forms for members to take back to their branches to collect more signatures and our leaflet explaining our aims. We have since attended HE and Health Conferences and are due to go to the NDC in Bournemouth in June **Marjorie Roscoe**

EDITORIAL by Rob Beeston

Chair to the GL Region Retired Members Committee

Welcome to our May newsletter .Since our last issue so much has been going on within the Union it is hard to know where to start. First I must thank all our members who have responded and been active in all Unison's recent campaign's i.e. pensions day of action, plus some of us who have been active in our branches as contacts or champions. And then in March a lot of us attended the kill the bill NHS rally in London in which I am told over two thousand people participated. This campaign is so important to us as the older members of our society as we will need it most. Make no bones about it this coalition government is out to destroy the NHS as we know it and privatise it and there are plenty of vultures out there waiting to get their hands on the billions of pounds in the NHS. The ADM went very well (see report) and it was nice to see some new faces on the committee, I also thought the speakers were excellent it was also pleasing to see the number of delegates in attendance. Our "Elder Abuse" campaign is now gaining momentum, (see report) We now have a stall at every Unison national conference and the interest shown has been great ***But the real important thing is our e-petition*** I urge you make sure your branch are aware of it and get them click on it. Also we would like to come along to branch committee or full meetings to explain what our campaign is all about and how they could help us.



<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/27208>

Click on the link

The Budget in Brief and How it will affect you

9th April 2012 Basic pension to rise in line with CPI from £102.15 to £107.45 for single pensioners, £163.35 to £171.85 for couples, had this increase been linked to RPI as it used to be it would have been and increased by another £20.80 a year.

9th April 2012 Means tested Pension Credit Guarantee for a single pensioner will rise from £137.35 to £142.70. A couple from £209.70 to £217.90.

9th April 2012 the basic personal allowance for Income Tax will rise from £7475 to £8105, Aged 65 to 74 will rise from £9940 to £10,500. Over the age of 75 will from £10,090 to £10,600.

The maximum income a pensioner can have and still get the age related allowances in full will also rise from £24,000 to £25,400. There will be further restrictions for incomes over £100,000.

However the Chancellor also announced that he would freeze the age-related allowances from 6th April 2013 at these levels until they align with the ordinary personal allowance. So those retiring after that time {born after 5 April 1948} will therefore receive a lower personal tax allowance of £9205.

This measure is expected to save the Exchequer £3.3bn. By 2016/17. This measure will result in 4.4m existing tax paying pensioners losing between £63-£83 a year, whilst future pensioners will suffer a loss of between £285 and £322 after tax, By contrast those earning more than £150,000 a year will see their tax drop next April from 50% to 45% giving them an extra £10,000 windfall.

Committee Secretary Report

- Due to the huge increase in the cost of postage, it would be really helpful if members with an email address let me know it, so I can email the newsletter out to you. It would be done in the strictest of confidence, others would not see your address. m.barr@unison.co.uk
- The IT training is going really well, We have already run one course back in March. One to come in June, There are still places on the September and November courses.



Key dates for 2012

Committee Meetings

Thursday 24th May

Thursday 9th August

Thursday 15 November

IT Training

27th/28th June

6th/7th September

7th/8th November

Annual Seminar

Thursday 20th September

Retired Members Conference

9th/10th October

Olympics

27th July—12th August

Life expectancy is currently 78 for Men and 82 for women

A white paper is to be published proposing the introduction of a single tier state pension for those retiring after 2015/16 of £140 a week, by combining the existing basic pension and the second rate pension into one payment. However someone retiring today with a 30 year contribution record would already get a combined pension of around £150 per week. Existing pensioners will also not be eligible for the payment.

Still requiring the approval of Parliament, the Chancellor announced to automatically raise the state pension age in line with longevity and estimates of life expectancy will be published in the summer. He wishes to raise the state pension age for men and women to 67 between April 2026 and April 2028.

Raising the state pension age is also linked to the age at which you will become entitled to winter fuel allowance, concessionary and travel and other age-related benefits. Initial analysis suggests that someone currently aged 33 would not qualify for a state pension until 70 whilst a 21 year old would have to work till 75.

A further £10bn cut to welfare spending by 2016/17 • Winter fuel payments to remain at £200 for household with someone at or over female state pension age, £300 for households with someone aged 80 or over • Married couples allowance to those born before April 6th 1935 goes from £7295 to £7705, the allowance will be subject to an income limit of £25,400, but there will be a minimum allowances of £2960 • Inheritance Tax allowance will remain at £325,000 or £650,00 for couples.

So Basically more cuts, Winter fuels have already taken a hit at a time of increase fuel costs on top of closures to Day Centres, cuts in funding to bus companies, resulting in few bus routes and community transport schemes. Changes to housing and disability benefits, reducing the quality of life for those affected. Happy Days !

Annual Delegates Meeting 16th Feb.

Linda Perks, Greater London Regional Secretary opened the meeting welcoming members, and gave an update on the pensions dispute, public sector pay freeze and the NHS campaign. Linda also invited members to join the Save our NHS rally on the 7th March. Also asked members to support Ken Livingstone in his Mayoral elections. Linda commended the vibrant RM Committee and offered regional support with setting up Retired members networks in branches. She answered question from the meeting. There were a couple of very different speakers, Sue O'Donnell who we featured in the last Staying Active, spoke on her sponsored walk and showed some wonderful pictures, she is due to do the South West Coastal Walk in June for the Bucket and Spade Appeal.

Joanne McCartney, London Labour Assembly Member for Enfield & Haringey spoke on the upcoming Mayoral and GLA elections. Highlighting issues on crime, transport, environment and increased privatisation of public services. Both speakers answered loads of questions. The General seats for the RM Committee 12/13 were filled but there was one Woman's seat vacant. A ballot took place as two women were proposed for it. Kay Lucey from Guys & St. Thomas was elected. The meeting was well attended about 65 delegates, a lot of lively discussion from the Q&A, A raffle was held, £67 was raised for UNISON Welfare, top prize a 2 night stay at Croyde Bay holiday resort. A good lunch was enjoyed by all. In the afternoon we had the 1st meeting of the new committee 2012/13. It was good to see 4 new faces, Rob Beeston was returned as Chair, this will be his 4th year.

Delegates to the GL Region RM Committee 2012/13

Rob Beeston—Chair. Delegate to Regional Committee, Labour Link, RM Conference

Marjorie Roscoe—Vice Chair, delegate to National RM Committee,

John Mc Allister - Welfare Committee

Irene Hennessy—Sub for SOC
Gulnahr Khan—NPC

Arati Banerjee

Michael Apps

Paul Duployen

Kay Lucey

Peter Howard—Age UK

Phyl Eyers—LOPSG

Kathy Tytler

Fred Roberts—delegate SOC

Richard Hewgill

Ann Jefferson—SERTUC

Valerie Easmon-George—Welfare Committee

Chris Louca— NPC

Mary Mills

Anne Malcolm—SERTUC

Nick Venedi— Regional Council, has since resigned as he is working for a couple of days a week, making him unable to be a RM.

Raymond Gnanapragasam— SERTUC, Regional Council Delegate and National Delegate Conference

Joan McSweeney

Jim O'Leary—Regional Council

Parmodh Sharma

Tony Vass – co-opted on for working on the Elder Abuse Campaign

Useful

Contact details

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UNISON Welfare

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UNISON Direct for

all other numbers

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London Wide Voting by Party

Labour—911,204

Conservatives—708,528

Green Party—189,215

Liberal Dem.—150,447

UKIP—100,040

BNP—47,024

**Christian People Alli. –
38,758**

English democrats—22,025

T.U & Soc Coalition—17,686

Ijaz Hayat—9,114

The House Party—8,126

National Front—8,006

Rathy Alagaratnam—4,835

Mayoral Election final result

Boris Johnson

1,054,811

Ken Livingstone

992,273