# Old Grey Matter article for the EADT – Saturday 29th April

# SOS – Save Our Services

The National Pensioners Convention (NPC) is holding publicity stalls this weekend at two Mayday Festivals in Suffolk. The one at Lowestoft is indoors on Mayday itself, 1st May, while the Ipswich Festival is at Alexandra Park tomorrow afternoon, Sunday 30th April, when we hope you can visit us. Check the Anglia Website at: www.anglianpc.com to see details in the More column (Past Events drop-down).

Since 1978, the Ipswich festival has given local people the opportunity to join in the celebration of the International Day of the Worker, also known as Labour Day. The celebration begins with a march by Trades Unions and Community Groups at 11.00 am from Ipswich Town Hall to Alexandra Park.

Ron Douglas, former President and Honorary Officer of NPC will be present at our gazebo stall in the park along with Kevin Hilson, Chair of the Lowestoft branch of Suffolk Pensioners, to distribute literature, discuss issues and hopefully recruit new members to the NPC, the campaigning organisation run for and by older people. Thousands are expected to turn up for this free festival organised by today’s workers (who will become tomorrow’s pensioners) so why not pay the NPC stall a visit?

At Lowestoft there is a festival from 12 noon to 10 pm at The Grit, Lowestoft Centre for Arts and Heritage, Old Court Buildings, Old Nelson Street organised by Waveney Trades Council with an Open Mike! Members of Anglia Region NPC and Lowestoft branch of Suffolk Pensioners Association will be present in the afternoon to present and discuss pensioner issues.

Apart from levels of pensions issues, a main concern is that community services are disappearing - austerity is still very much with us, so the rate at which they disappear will only gather pace, unless we counteract it somehow! People are having difficulties accessing public transport, banks and cash, health & social care appointments, as well as good quality housing and many other services. The 'digital-first' push is morphing into 'digital only', excluding many older people who are not online leading to higher costs and inability to access basic services. We encourage all to write to their MP and local authorities and respond to consultations about services in their area that ought to work for all.

Christopher J. Brooks, Chair,

Suffolk, & Anglia Region,

Pensioners Associations (NPC).