Old Grey Matter – April 2019

 **Hardship Faces Future Pensioners**

Under a headline that states ‘Hardship faces future pensioners’ the April Campaign bulletin of the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) publishes findings from a report by the Centre for Ageing Better. The NPC campaigns not just for today’s pensioners but also has concerns for tomorrow’s in its regard for uniting the generations.

The report revealed that millions of people risk missing out on a good retirement due to increasing pressure on health and care services, and low incomes.
Their report, The State of Ageing in 2019 warns that today’s least well-off over 50s face greater challenges than wealthier peers and are likely to die younger, become sicker earlier and fall out of work due to ill health.
The evidence shows huge differences in how people experience ageing depending on factors such as where they live, their income, their sex or ethnicity.
For example, the poorest are three times more likely than the wealthiest to retire early because of ill health.
Although the population is ageing, a significant and increasing number of people are managing multiple health conditions and mobility problems from mid-life onwards, with
23% of those aged 50 to 64 having three or more long-term health problems.
The report also reveals that pensioner poverty is rising for the first time since 2010 and is more prevalent for women and black, Asian and minority ethnic groups.
At least 1.3 m over 55s also live in homes that are hazardous to their health.
Ron Douglas, NPC president said: “The idea that we can simply keep raising the state pension age flies in the face of all the evidence which shows how more and more people are struggling to work even up to 65, let alone 68 or beyond.”
“The pensioners of tomorrow are going to be more reliant on the state pension and decent care services than earlier generations. That’s why it is vital that we unite the generations in the campaign for better state pensions and a National Care Service that is free at the point of need.”
In the NPCs campaign to see free TV licences maintained for the over 75s I welcome the DUPs commitment to do the same and try to bring the benefit back under government control so releasing the BBC to continue with what it does best ie to provide decent Radio & TV programmes without the diversion of having to operate government austerity policy foisted upon them!

Chris Brooks, Chair,
Suffolk, & Anglia Region,
Pensioners Associations (NPC).