



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

16<sup>th</sup> November 2021

*Jean Contrevent*

**RE: 'TRIPLE LOCK'**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the 'Triple Lock' to the State Pension. I have read your comments on this with interest.

Every year, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions is required by law to review whether benefits have kept pace with inflation or earnings increases.

Over the last two years, the pandemic has caused a statistical anomaly in average earnings. Last year, the law changed for one year to increase State Pensions by 2.5 percent, when average earnings had fallen and price inflation increased by half a percentage point. If this action had not been taken, State Pensions would have been frozen.

This year, the anomaly remains. As millions of people have left furlough and the labour market has changed significantly, reported average wage growth is due to be over 8 percent. It would not be right to increase pensions by this figure – it is not what the 'Triple Lock' was ever intended to deal with, would cost £4-5 billion, and would have to be funded by increasing taxes on working people.

On 7<sup>th</sup> September it was announced that there will be a move to a 'Double Lock' for one year only. This means the State Pension will rise next year by the higher of inflation, or 2.5 percent, now confirmed as a 3.1 percent increase.

This approach will ensure pensioners' spending power is preserved and that they are protected from higher costs of living. It will also ensure that as we are having to make difficult decisions elsewhere across public spending – including freezing public sector pay – pensioners are not unfairly benefitting from a statistical anomaly.

Colleagues at the Department for Work and Pensions have assured me that this measure is temporary for one year, and the 'Triple Lock' will apply as usual from next year for the remainder of this Parliament, in line with the manifesto commitment.

The 'Triple Lock' guarantee was put in place in 2011, which has led to the State Pension increasing by an average of 3 percent annually since. In total, the basic State Pension has increased by 35 percent or £2,050 since 2011. It is now worth £137.60 per week – relative to earnings, the highest it has been in 34 years. The full rate of the new State Pension is £179.60 per week, up from £155.65 when it was introduced in 2016.





These measures have meant there are 200,000 fewer pensioners in absolute poverty, compared to a decade ago. On top of this, pensioners continue to receive other support – free TV licences, free bus passes, winter fuel payments, and tax-free pension contributions worth over £50 billion.

I would also like to reassure you that I will continue to work with colleagues in Parliament to protect pensioners consistently.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**