



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

LONDON SW1A 0AA

15<sup>th</sup> March 2024

*Dear Committee,*

**RE: INDEPENDENT AGE CAMPAIGN**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about support for older people. I have read your comments with interest.

While I appreciate that the rising cost of living has presented challenges to older people, I am confident that the Government is providing substantial support to the most vulnerable.

To support households, over 2022-23 to 2024-25, the Government will provide cost of living support worth over £104 billion. As you note, the Government is providing targeted support to the most vulnerable through Cost of Living Payments, which have been paid to 8 million households on eligible means-tested benefits, 8 million pensioner households, and 6 million people on eligible disability benefits.

Additionally, in April 2023, the Government supported pensioners with the biggest State Pension uprating in history, with increases of 10.1 percent for the basic State Pension, the new State Pension and additional State Pensions. Indeed, in April 2024, the basic State Pension, new State Pension and additional State Pension will be uprated in line with average earnings growth of 8.5 percent.

Moreover, the Government has also provided an additional £1 billion of funding to enable the extension of the Household Support Fund, bringing the total funding to £2.5 billion. This extension allows local authorities in England to continue to provide discretionary support to vulnerable older people.

Alongside this, in response to the rise in wholesale gas and electricity prices, the Government is maintaining the Energy Price Guarantee (EPG), which limits the amount consumers can be charged per unit of gas or electricity. The current price guarantee, set at £3,000, will support households until April 2024. Alongside this, the Government will continue to provide Winter Fuel Payments to those who have reached State Pension age. This stands alongside the many other benefits provided to pensioners, including free bus passes and free prescriptions.

Further, the Government is working with consumer groups and industry to consider the best approach to consumer protection in energy markets, as part of wider retail market reforms. I understand that a variety of options, including social tariffs, are under consideration. As set out in the 'Energy Security Strategy', the Government will continue to ensure that energy is affordable for all consumers.



I hope that this response reassures you that older people in the UK are being adequately supported.

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**