

## **BBC LICENCE CONSULTATION.**

### **A RESPONSE FROM DUNDEE PENSIONERS' FORUM.**

At today's (5<sup>th</sup> February) meeting of Dundee Pensioners' Forum, it was reported by numerous members that no one, **absolutely not one person**, to whom we have spoken has claimed to be in favour of scrapping free television licences for persons over 75 years old. Our members have spoken with MPs, MSPs, local councillors, members of the Health and Social Care integrated joint board, GPs, district nurses, home helps, clergy, neighbours, fellow pensioners, our children, our grandchildren and their mates. Across every political, social and generational divide **absolutely not one person** has said a word of support for the proposal.

Responses have ranged from disgust that Parliament has dumped the question onto the unelected board members of the BBC, which is a taxpayer funded organisation, to one woman who simply said, "It's a sin, so it is."

Two of the big issues (Brexit aside) that politicians have been on about are poverty and loneliness. They are, they say, determined to tackle these issues.

To cancel free TV licences for over 75s exacerbates both these problems because so often the two go together. Generally speaking the longer one survives the less they have of savings, if indeed they had any in the first place. Generally speaking the longer one survives the less mobile they become and therefore tend to spend ever increasing amounts of time in their homes and for so many the TV is their principal companion.

Clearly politicians understand that ending free TV licences for the over 75s has a whiff of nastiness about it and runs contrary to their publicly avowed intent to tackle pensioner poverty and loneliness. They could therefore not themselves propose such a policy, so they have hived it off to the BBC who are not an organisation charged with making social policy.

We hope therefore that the BBC will send the ball back into the politicians court by refusing to cancel the over 75s free licences and demand that the politicians resolve the matter by taking responsibility for finding the requisite funding for the BBC to continue the free licences in keeping with the Government's oft repeated social policy of care for the elderly.

We, the Dundee Pensioners' Forum, unanimously and vigorously oppose any plans to take away free TV licenses from persons over 75 years old.

Rev. Erik Cramb,

Executive Committee Member

On behalf of Dundee Pensioners' Forum