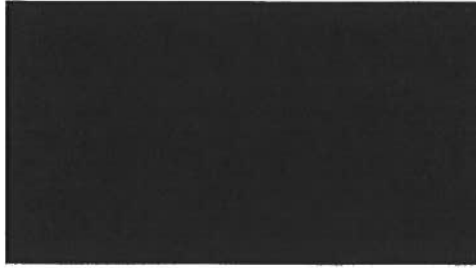


Hornsey Pensioners Action Group



Sir David Clementi Chairman,
BBC Board,
BBC Broadcasting House,
Portland Place,
London W1A 1AA

February 10th 2019

Dear Sir David,

Over 75s TV Licence

I am writing on behalf of a local pensioner group, Hornsey Pensioners Action Group.

Many of us have written to our local MP Catherine West seeking her support for retaining the over 75s concessionary TV licence. She shares our concerns and has written to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

We are angry that the BBC accepted the responsibility for funding this concession that should be funded through taxation. The Department of Work and Pensions has responsibility for such concessions, especially as the UK state pension is the lowest in OECD countries leaving many older people in penury.

Loneliness is a growing problem and it is part of the government's remit to tackle social isolation amongst older people. Those most in need, many living alone, depend upon this concession for information and company. Access to information is a civic right and older people in particular need the TV as many in this generation are not on line.

Note that older people are amongst those who have paid taxes and continue to do so. There is no danger of affluent pensioners receiving a concession they do not need as it is necessary to apply for a free licence.

The DWP should not have shifted the funding of concessions to the BBC, not least because proper funding is needed to maintain good quality programmes. However, we note that some front line and back room BBC employees appear to earn inflated salaries.

Options in the consultation include means testing. It is not acceptable that a nongovernmental body should conduct means testing. In any case means testing is evidently not cost effective and fails to serve those really in need.

Please take note of these reasons for keeping the concessionary over 75s TV licence.

Yours sincerely
Janet Shapiro

