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STANDING UP FOR OLDER PEOPLE

One of my main areas of interest and concern is the lack of attention older people get in the policy making process, in fact often they are completely forgotten. No other section of society is so short changed on services, or has to tolerate such restrictions on their freedoms and opportunities. One of the main reasons why I wanted to be an MP was to address these issues and in particular:

- The poor service and lack of standing on the community of older people.
- I'd like to see a one stop shop for all older peoples benefits and support with obtaining them, e.g. pension credit, fuel poverty grants etc.
- I want to see improvement in health and social care and better integration, with one case manager per person. Where services cannot be provided I want to see spouses being able to be more involved in their partners care plan, helping with physio etc.
- I want to see scheme which negates the need for older people to deplete all their assets to pay for care.
- I want to see more freedom for people to retire when they want to, and an end to age discrimination.
- I want to see certain service budgets ring fenced, as they are for children's services, and national schemes, such as bus passes, protected against cuts to local services.

What a Conservative Government would do:

PENSIONS

We need to reinvigorate a culture of savings in Britain . We will raise the basic state pension in line with earnings to help stop the spread of the means test. At the same time, we will look at how we can simplify the rules and regulations around pensions to encourage companies to offer high quality pension provision to all employees.

We have called for emergency pension protection in the light of the troubles in the financial markets, but Labour have so far refused to act. We want the rules which force people to lock themselves into long-term pension arrangements, either on their retirement date or their 75th birthday, to be suspended until the current turmoil has receded.

A Conservative Government would help the millions of pensioners who have suffered from a decade of Gordon Brown's tax raids by raising the tax allowance for pensioners by £2,000 to £11,490.

SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE

As well as recognising the contributions older people make to society, we also need to help those elderly people who are amongst the most vulnerable in our society.

So a Conservative Government will look at ways of creating more personalisation in health and social care, and more patient power.

In addition, we want to see much greater use of direct payments and individual budgets, which give people real control over their care.