



Blue Collar Conservatism
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Lord Hall of Birkenhead CBE
Director General
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Portland Place
London W1A 1AA

Friday 17 July 2020

Dear Lord Hall of Birkenhead

Ref: LICENCE FEE FOR PEOPLE AGED 75 AND OVER

We are writing to express our disappointment at the BBC's decision to scrap free TV licences for most people over the age of 75 from the 1st August 2020 and urge you to reconsider this decision.

When millions of elderly Britons have been asked to stay at home during the global COVID-19 crisis, the timing of this announcement could not have been worse. Frankly, it is a kick in the teeth for millions of over-75s who have had a torrid time in lockdown.

We welcome the BBC's commitment to protecting the people who would find it most difficult to pay by continuing to cover the licences of those eligible for Pension Credit. However, this is not good enough and the cost of this proposed scheme is considerably less than you have been contributing already to free TV licences for the over 75s.

The BBC's annual income is £5 billion. Why, then, is this announcement necessary? We question the need for the BBC to allocate the enormous sum of £100 million on diversity, which with strong management could be achieved for minimal cost. Reducing the excessive salaries of your highest-paid stars and executives would also provide ample financial respite.

The fact that you have prioritised pensioners to take the brunt of your cost-savings shows how detached you have become from your viewers.

Now is not the time to scrap free TV licences for over-75s. Please do reconsider. We would welcome the chance to discuss this with you in person.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JG", written in a cursive style.

Jonathan Gullis MP, Stoke-on-Trent North

Imran Ahmad Khan MP, Wakefield

Sir David Amess MP, Southend West

Lee Anderson MP, Ashfield

Sarah Atherton MP, Wrexham

Shaun Bailey MP, West Bromwich West

Duncan Baker MP, North Norfolk

Simon Baynes MP, Clwyd South

Aaron Bell MP, Newcastle-under-Lyme

Scott Benton MP, Blackpool South

Peter Bone MP, Wellingborough

Ben Bradley MP, Mansfield

Paul Bristow MP, Peterborough

Andy Carter MP, Warrington South

Brendan Clarke-Smith MP, Bassetlaw

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP, The Cotswolds

Philip Davies MP, Shipley

Dr James Davies MP, Vale of Clwyd

Dehenna Davison MP, Bishop Auckland

Richard Drax MP, South Dorset

Rt Hon Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP, Chingford and Woodford Green

Mark Eastwood MP, Dewsbury

Michael Fabricant MP, Lichfield

Simon Fell MP, Barrow and Furness

Nick Fletcher MP, Don Valley

Rt Hon Mark Francois MP, Rayleigh and Wickford

Marcus Fysh MP, Yeovil

Peter Gibson MP, Darlington

Rt Hon Dame Cheryl Gillan MP, Chesham and Amersham

Rt Hon Robert Goodwill MP, Scarborough and Whitby

James Gray MP, North Wiltshire

Kate Griffiths MP, Burton

Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Harlow

Simon Hoare MP, North Dorset

Richard Holden MP, North West Durham

Paul Howell MP, Sedgefield

Tom Hunt MP, Ipswich

Mark Jenkinson MP, Workington

Daniel Kawczyński MP, Shrewsbury

Pauline Latham OBE MP, Mid Derbyshire

Andrew Lewer MBE MP, Northampton South

Chris Loder MP, West Dorset

Mark Logan MP, Bolton North East

Marco Longhi MP, Dudley North

Tim Loughton MP, East Worthing and Shoreham

Craig Mackinlay MP, South Thanet

Anthony Mangnall MP, Totnes

Karl McCartney MP, Lincoln

Jason McCartney, Colne Valley

Rt Hon Esther McVey MP, Tatton

Robbie Moore MP, Keighley

Dr Kieran Mullan MP, Crewe and Nantwich

Lia Nici MP, Great Grimsby

Tom Randall MP, Gedling

Andrew Rosindell MP, Romford

Dean Russell MP, Watford

Greg Smith MP, Buckingham

Alexander Stafford MP, Rother Valley

Bob Stewart MP, Beckenham

James Sunderland MP, Bracknell

Matt Vickers MP, Stockton South

Martin Vickers MP, Cleethorpes

Christian Wakeford MP, Bury South

Jamie Wallis MP, Bridgend

Heather Wheeler MP, South Derbyshire

Jacob Young MP, Redcar