



## **WEST MIDLAND PENSIONERS CONVENTION**

### **PRESS RELEASE: WINTER FUEL PAYMENTS.**

# The Labour Government Betrays British Pensioners

The announcement by Rachael Reeves, the Labour Government Chancellor, to means test the Winter Fuel Payment will leave millions of UK pensioners dreading the onset of this coming winter. Ending this Universal Benefit introduced by a previous Labour Chancellor, Gordon Brown, along with several other Universal Benefits, in recognition that despite being the sixth wealthiest economy in the Industrialised world Britain still had one of the lowest State Pensions. Which remains the case today.

With 2 million pensioners already struggling on incomes just above benefit thresholds that would entitle them to claim Pension Credit and a further estimated 800,000 pensioners not claiming benefits including Pension Credit they are entitled to. This decision by the new Labour Government will leave at least three million pensioners facing that stark choice once more this coming winter between ensuring their homes are adequately heated and having sufficient food on the table.

Mean Testing the Winter Fuel Payment will save the Government an estimated £1.5 billion a year, largely offset by the added administrative burden of means testing and the additional financial and health pressures on our already struggling NHS of millions of older pensioners living in cold damp homes throughout the winter months.

We of course, welcome the decision by the Labour Chancellor to honour the Pay Review body recommendations for our teachers and other public sector workers, along with a just and fair settlement for our NHS Junior Doctors- and of course we recognise the serious financial crisis the incoming Labour Government faces.

But we say to the new Labour Chancellor - tax the rich, tackle tax evasion and tax avoidance and excessive corporate profits. - Reverse the devastating decision to axe winter fuel payments for millions of pensioners.

The National Pensioners Convention is calling on Chancellor Rachael Reeves to reconsider her shock decision to end 'universal' winter fuel payments. Jan Shortt, the General Secretary said of this decision "I seriously believe the Chancellor has underestimated the harm her decision will cause to older people still struggling with energy costs and facing higher rates in October. It is absolutely shocking that the new Labour Government should treat older, vulnerable people in this manner."

This Press Release was issued by Sandra Durkin West Midlands Pensioners Convention Regional Secretary email: [thedurk@btinternet.com](mailto:thedurk@btinternet.com) mob:07860576701 or [brian.j.allbutt@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:brian.j.allbutt@hotmail.co.uk) mob 07342264482