

Dates for Your Diary

1st December - Committee Meeting
16th December - Branch Meeting
18th December - West Midlands
Regional Council
8th January 2009 - New Year Party
6th January - Committee Meeting
20th January - Branch Meeting
29th January - West Midlands
Regional Council
3rd February - Committee meeting
17th February - Branch Meeting
24 - 25th March Biennial Conference

Cut Your Energy Bills

The Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (EEAC) has suggested ways to reduce your energy bills.

- Insulate your walls , loft and hot water tank.
- Turn off radiators in rooms you don't use.
- Shower rather than bathe.
- Only use as much water as necessary in pans and kettles.
- Keep your fridge and freezer doors closed.
- Draught proof doors and windows.
- Use energy efficient light bulbs.
- Keep your heating thermostat at 21 degrees or less.
- Only turn on the heating when you are at home.
- Turn off all appliances and products on standby.
- Wash clothes at 30 degrees.
- Air dry clothes whenever possible.
- **The Savings are up to You**

Coventry Pensioners Convention

Affiliated to West Midlands Pensioners Convention
and National Pensioners Convention



Meet every 3rd Tuesday of the Month.
Room 02, The Council House, Coventry
10.30am - 12.30pm

For Further Details Contact
Pat Gilbert Branch Secretary and Editor
Harp Place, 2 Sandy Lane,
Coventry CV1 4DX
Tel. 024 7672 7273
email patgilbert@ntlworld.com

All New Members Welcome

Issue 3

December 2008

Meeting with Minister for Pension Reform Mike O'Brien

This meeting was held at the Transport Museum, Hales Street, Coventry on the 26th September and was supported by about 50 members. Thank you to all those of you who attended. The Pensions Minister while very approachable did not have anything new to say really. Many of his answers were well versed and rhetoric. He did say however that during his time in office he had challenged the legality of the Government withholding the names of those on Pension Credit from the energy companies who could implement a social tariff and he had been successful in this. He was currently campaigning for all Pensioners to claim their entitlement. He was also well versed in the campaign by the National Pensioners Convention. The next week Mike O'Brien was moved from the above position so we will have to wait and see what a new Minister will bring. Our thanks also go to Jim Cunningham MP who also attended and is willing to follow up questions which time did not allow to be asked.. The Transport Museum were superb in making us so welcome and making everything run smoothly. It was an excellent venue. Our thanks go to Gary Hall and his staff.

Lobby of Parliament

A combined group of members of Coventry Pensioners Convention, Coventry Older Peoples Forum and some Union Members attended the Lobby of Parliament on the 22nd of October 2008 representing the Pensioners of Coventry. Thank you to all those who gave up their day to lobby to get the State Pension raised to £150 per week. We must continue to lobby the Government to make our voices heard.

Women Need a Higher State Pension

Dot Gibson vice president of the National Pensioners Convention says that 5 million existing women pensioners fail to get a full state pension because they spent years raising children, caring for relatives or working part time. Many of these women are now living below the poverty line and will simply be unable to buy back any years pension as the Government suggests. In any case an extra years pension bought will only bring in another £2.35 per week on the state pension.

Women's Pensions are a national disgrace and nothing can mask the fact that the basic state pension must be raised across the board for all pensioners to help them avoid poverty in retirement.

Biennial Delegate Conference 24 - 25th March 2009 Royal Court Hotel Keresley, Coventry

This conference is held every two years and includes discussion on policy and election of National Pensioners Convention officers. It is open to all affiliated members and anyone from our Branch wishing to attend should contact Pat Gilbert the Branch Secretary and make Coventry's voice heard at a national level.

Time for the Care System to Care Says help the Aged

Care should be provided for everyone who needs it - not for just the poorest or those in the most critical need. It is crucial that we move away from someone's income being the deciding factor in the care they receive. Sometimes just a little bit of support can go a long way to improving general health, well being and quality of life.

When you look at the inconsistencies in criteria between different local authorities it is easy to see why older people have lost faith in the care system. We desperately need a system that doesn't leave people with the painstaking choice of arranging their own care without support, or doing without entirely. The Commission for Social Care Inspection has recommended a minimum entitlement to help and support from a local authority. Everyone is entitled to good quality information and advice and the introduction of a national formula for allocation of resources to people will be a step towards a fairer allocation. It is hoped that this will be sooner rather than later as more Pensioners face the coming winter often alone.

Pensioners Parliament 2009 2 - 4 June 2009

Winter Gardens Blackpool

The Parliament will include Question Time session with leading Politicians, separate debates on Taxation, Local Services and Health Care plus guest speakers Michael Parkinson and Professor Alan Walker. Anyone who would like to attend the Parliament should contact the Secretary for further details.

New Year Party

Thursday 8th January 2009
12.30pm - 4.30pm

Railway Club, Spon End, Coventry Cost
£3.00

This is a members only event. Renewal of membership slips and a form for applying for tickets is enclosed with this newsletter. Renewal of membership costs £2.00 and we welcome also new members at £2.00 for the year.

Cost of renewal of membership and a ticket to the party will be £5.00.

For any further information contact Pat Gilbert Branch Secretary on 02476727273. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for return of membership cards and tickets for the New Year Party or hand forms to a Committee Member if you are in regular contact with them and they will be returned by the same route.

Free 10 Year Smoke Alarms

The Fire service are offering free Home Fire Safety checks and will install a 10 year smoke alarm in your home free of charge.

To arrange an appointment telephone the Freephone Helpline 0800 389 5525

Want to Be More Active

We are looking for people who would like to become more involved and also have some time to spare to come on to the Committee. We meet as a Committee once a month generally on the first Tuesday of the month. We work as a team and welcome any new suggestions or ideas.