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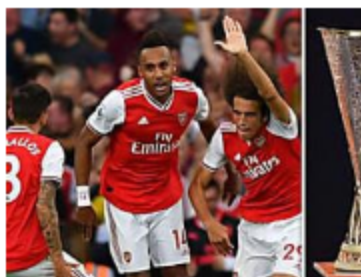
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Iain Duncan Smith's think tank plan to hike pension age to 75 branded 'immoral' by ex Tory

A FORMER Conservative Party minister has branded Iain Duncan Smith's bizarre proposal to hike the pension age to 75 "chilling and immoral".

By CARLY READ

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Ros Altmann, who was the Tory pensions minister, said Mr Duncan Smith's think tank's plan to re-train people older than 50 to find jobs that would in turn raise the age at which Britons would claim their pension was "outrageous". She told the Daily Mail: "Forcing Britons to work until their mid-70s may help to boost the economy by £182 billion a year. "But to me the idea is chilling and immoral.

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"It is an outrageous betrayal of people who have worked hard, paid their taxes and made their National Insurance contributions for decades in the expectation that they will receive at least a

basic income so they can retire, rather than being forced to labour until they drop.”

She added the proposal by Mr Duncan Smith's think tank also implies those at the age of 74 who cannot find work would be expected to go on the dole.

The Baroness added: “More than a million over-50s want to work but can't find a job because age discrimination is embedded in the labour market.

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“Increasing support for these people - with retraining programmes and employer incentives - should be the first priority, before increasing the state pension age.”



The proposal was thought of by Mr Duncan Smith's Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) (Image: GETTY)

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A No10 spokeswoman said the proposal was not Government policy (Image: GETTY)

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The proposal, thought of by Mr Duncan Smith's Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), could also shorten the life expectancy of some Britons in disadvantaged areas, she added.

She said: "The better-off, whose employment does not usually entail physical labour, might hope to live well into their 80s with good health," she said. "But for people burned out by tough manual work, who tend to have poorer housing, diets, access to healthcare and are at greater risk of ill-health and frailty, death comes much sooner.

"This is already a grave injustice in our society. Driving up the pension age even further makes it worse - particularly for those groups who are statistically more likely to die in their late 60s or early 70s, who will suddenly see the finishing line pushed so far into the distance that it becomes meaningless."

She added that throughout her time in Mr Duncan Smith's role, she had rarely seen a proposal "with the potential to do such damage".