



State pension increase: Older people rail against 'baseless attacks' on 10% triple lock uplift

pensioners should not get full inflation protection next year... their costs have soared'



The Government has said pensioners are particularly vulnerable to soaring costs (Photo: Peter Cade/Stone RF/Getty)



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Older people have railed against “baseless attacks” after the Government confirmed the **state pension will rise by around 10 per cent next year**.

Supporters of the increase said it was necessary, as older people were skipping meals and living in “cold and dark homes” in the cost-of-living crisis.

But the move has been criticised by some commentators as the Government argues against a similar rise for wages, saying that public sector workers should be rewarded without worsening inflation.

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Pensioners are particularly vulnerable in the cost-of-living crisis, ministers said.

The Government has confirmed it will restore the triple lock, which ensures the **state pension** rises every year by whichever is the **highest of inflation, earnings growth or 2.5 per cent**, after suspending the policy for 2022 over concerns about how affordable it was for the public purse coming out of lockdown.

Baroness Altmann, a Conservative peer and former pensions minister, said pensioners were betrayed by the suspension of the triple lock, which broke an election manifesto pledge.

“This has resulted in rising pensioner poverty, and those who complain that public sector pay is not rising by as much as [inflation] are ignoring the value of public sector pensions.

“I’m really sad to see the comments suggesting that pensioners should not get full inflation protection next year... their costs have soared and most workers have incomes way above the £9,500 that poorer pensioners live on. Pensioners were betrayed this year, it should not happen again.”

Dennis Reed, director of the Silver Voices campaign group for the over-sixties, said members had told him they were “infuriated by these baseless attacks on state pensioners”.

“This is a clear attempt to pit working families against older people to add to the divisions caused by the cost-of-living crisis.”

Suspending the triple lock meant the state pension rose by 3.1 per cent rather than eight per cent, cutting the living standards of older people who rely on the state pension, said Mr Reed.

A 10 per cent increase next year will hand people on the full basic state pension rate an extra £14 a week, while those on the full new rate will get £18.50.

He challenged those “indulging in these vicious attacks” to live on the state pension.

“Are we really saying that an extra £14 a week is unjustified in the current climate of rampant energy, fuel and food inflation?”

There is speculation that restoring the triple lock **is particularly important for the Government, given that they rely on older voters at election time.**

But Morgan Vine, head of policy and influencing at the charity Independent Age, described restoring the triple lock policy as “essential” for older people’s financial security as prices soar.

“This year, pensioners have faced a real-terms cut... The impact of this cannot be ignored – we’ve heard from too many older people who are skipping meals and living in cold and dark homes, because the extra money is simply not there to buy food and cover the rising bills.

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“Ensuring the state pension rises with the cost of living will not only support current pensioners but also working age people who will be future pensioners. Research has shown that getting rid of the triple lock now could double the amount a low-paid young worker needs to save to avoid poverty in older age.”

The Women Against State Pension Inequality (Waspi) campaign said women affected by the state pension age changes “were hit particularly hard by the suspension of the triple lock”.

“Our adult children support us and don’t want to see pensioners and those of working age set against each other,” said Angela Madden, chair and finance director of Waspi.

“Everyone is struggling right now, so the Government should be doing more to protect all citizens from the adverse affects of inflation. It must also be borne in mind that the UK state pension is among the lowest in Europe, so a 10 per cent increase may go some way towards ‘levelling up’ pensioners in one of the richest countries in the world.” 