



Former pensions minister Ros Altmann (Image: Internet Unknown)

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## Ex-Tory minister urges Boris Johnson to reduce minimum pension age to 61

If the PM accepts Ros Altmann's plan it would mean anyone with 45 years of national insurance contributions but unable to work because of ill health would be able to retire five years early on a reduced state pension

By **Nigel Nelson**, Political Editor

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Former Tory pensions minister Ros Altmann is calling on Boris Johnson to reduce the minimum pension age to 61.

If the PM accepts her plan it would mean anyone with 45 years of national insurance contributions but unable to work because of ill health would be able to retire five years early on a reduced state pension.

Under the present system one in seven 65-year-olds have been pushed into poverty because the pension age is now 66 for both men and women. That will go up to 67 in 2026.

Research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies showed 100,000 older people fell below the poverty line in 2020 as 700,000 65-year-olds had to wait the extra year before getting pension payments worth £142 per week.

Under Baroness Altmann's scheme those who could not continue working would qualify for a pension of around £84 a week instead of having to rely on jobless benefits.

Those who could show shortened life expectancy would be able to claim the full whack. The plan could be paid for from the £4.9billion saved by raising the pension age.



Boris Johnson faces calls to reduce the minimum pension age (Image: POOL/AFP via Getty Images)

Official figures show that healthy life spans are as low as 52 for those living in deprived areas but 70 plus for wealthier regions.

Baroness Altman, appointed pensions minister by **David Cameron** in 2015, said: "This is about social justice as well as social support."



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