



Is this all the thanks they get MR CHANCELLOR?

Not long ago Boris Johnson and his Cabinet cronies lined up with the rest of us to "Clap for the Carers".

Not only Health workers, - Boris and his mates appeared daily in the media hailing the work and sacrifices made by all 'essential' workers.

The Chancellor now wants to impose a 3-year pay cap on most public sector workers.

There's minor sops for workers at the very bottom, but he's also proposing a 3-year wage freeze for the Public Service!

He's floated the idea of a cut in the minimum wage - the only thing that keeps many workers above the bread line.

That's it, Sishi give them a good kicking while they're down! You'll make a good Prime Minister some day!



Who DO BORIS AND RISHI think EMPTIED THEIR BINS during the crisis?

There was never doubt that workers across the Country would respond to the national threat from the COVID virus. Health workers worked, in some cases until they dropped - consultants, doctors and other professional front-line' staff - hospital porters, cleaners and catering staff. Politicians queued up to heap praise on the NHS staff and all other Public Service workers who performed miracles to keep the country going during the first phase of the pandemic.

Have Boris and his Cabinet forgotten that magnificent team performance? Has he also forgotten the shop workers, Postal workers, delivery drivers and all the thousands of others who kept the country moving.

Has he forgotten others who worked equally hard to keep other vital services running?

The Bin Men, Road sweepers, school admin clerical staff, cleaners and janitors, home care workers, childcare workers not forgetting the wonderful Dinner Ladies all essential Public Service workers who performed above and beyond normal to play a vital part for the 'team'.

The Government should do what's right and announce

a decent wage rise. ALL WORKERS have more than earned it. Anything less will destroy morale when the entire country is counting on them."

Cruel Body Blow

UNISON General Secretary Dave Prentis said "Key workers across ALL public services remain at the heart of the fight against Covid.

Reports of pay restraint for all but frontline NHS staff would be a cruel body blow to other health, care and public service employees who are working tirelessly to get us through the pandemic.

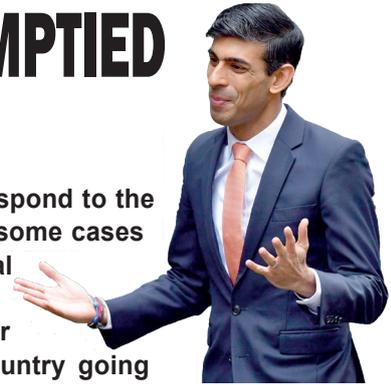
It could also backfire badly with the public."

NHS front-line staff deserve a decent wage to reflect the incredible effort during the crisis, but it was a TEAM effort!

Paramedics and Ambulance Technicians may have been 'first-line' staff - but they depended on others members of the team such as vehicle maintenance and supply staff to keep the drive against the virus on track.

We haven't forgotten

Other essential workers - supermarket delivery drivers and shop workers - are paid on the basic minimum wage. You may have forgotten them, but they certainly won't forget you when the next election comes along.



There ARE other ways to do it ...

Rishi Sunak has tried to justify his wage restraint proposals by underlining the cost of the pandemic to the Public purse.

"We've had the highest Government borrowing in Peacetime" he said "and it has to be reduced.

Fair enough, but why are the Public Service workers being asked to find it? Why should it always hit the poorest paid who can least afford it?

The simple and easiest way is to raise taxes. It won't go down with Tory supporters but it is by far the fairest. Let those who can afford it pay for it!

And then there's BREXIT ...

While they can't be totally blamed for the COVID mess, Boris, Michael Gove and Co won't be able to duck out of the other mess of their own making. The chickens are coming home to roost ...

The pandemic has conveniently deflected attention from BREXIT as we are facing a 'No Deal' departure from the EU. More and more fears are being voiced now about its effect on the UK economy. More people are seeing through the lies and false promises that won them over in the 2016 Referendum

Enjoy Xmas but BEHAVE !

The UK Government and devolved Administrations in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast have agreed to relax the COVID restrictions for 5 days over Xmas.

It's important to "keep the heid" and don't overdo it. Many will want to enjoy the festive with family - but there are still conditions. This is just not a "Green light to Party".

Stick rigidly to the guidelines on social mixing and distancing. It might be difficult, but cut out the hugging and kissing! Take care and we could be pretty well be COVID free early in the New Year .

Telephone scams have increased in Lockdown - Don't let them fool YOU ...

Nearly a third of all fraud is committed over the telephone and many of the victims are elderly. Avoid 'cold callers' at all costs. Look for these warning signs to help you spot the fraudsters ...

- The caller doesn't give you time to think, tries to stop you speaking to a family member or friend or is insistent and makes you feel uncomfortable.
- The caller tells you your Account has been compromised and asks you to transfer money to a new account.

Your bank, the tax office or the police will NEVER ask you to transfer or withdraw money.

- They phone to ask for your 4-digit card PIN or your online banking password. They may ask you to give it by tapping the number into the telephone keypad rather than saying

the numbers out loud. This is a scam.

- They ask you to withdraw your money to hand over to them for safe-keeping.
- They say that you're a victim of fraud and offer to send a courier to your home to collect your cash, PIN, payment card or cheque book.

No matter who they say they are, don't fall for their tricks. Your bank, the tax office or the police will never come to your house to collect your cash, bank cards or ask for your pin.

For more information visit <https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/advice>

Don't fall for



phone scams



DAVE MOSS from Dumfries jumped on his bike to offer this advice

ELECTRIC CYCLING - The Future is Electric

I've been cycling most of my life - racing and long rides. I've 6 bikes in my garage and still ride

regularly with Dumfries CC. Advancing years don't help me keep up with younger riders - but I'm still pretty nifty on a bike.

As you'll imagine it's bit disconcerting for me when a mature-looking lady cycles past me going uphill - complete with saddle bag of groceries. This isn't a sudden loss in my athletic ability - it's the discreet electric motor on the lady's bike.

Cycling has many advantages. It's a convenient mode of transport - no waiting for a bus - parking is no problem. You can get back from the pub without having to pay a taxi (remember

when we could meet in a pub?). It's healthy, a fantastic non-weight bearing exercise.

What about the down sides? It's hard work going uphill. Setting off from a standing start and getting up to speed is also hard.

Recent advances in battery power are making cycling accessible for everyone - even older folks who are new to the game. Fear of traffic can be another downside, but with electric help up to 15 mph it's easy to keep closer to the speed of other traffic in town.

Another thing helped with motor assistance - it's that the extra weight of things like mudguards, pannier bags and having a more robust bike is not a problem. A bike suitable for a trip to the shops is now also at home on a longer ride in the countryside.

There's loads of options when choosing an electric bike.

There's wheel hub motors or ones built into the frame - external or internal batteries - different range between charges (generally, the longer range costs more).

The big difference is if the motor powers the bike when you stop peddling or not. Personally, I think the ones that stop when you stop peddling are the best and most like normal cycling. You can also set how much help you get from the motor. Less help is better exercise and the battery lasts longer.

If you get a new bike for Christmas, have a scout round your area and try to judge the best routes for you to handle. Not too many hills to begin with!

Once you're confident with the bike handling, you'll soon be rewarded with some great views and take full advantage of electric power.

International Day of People with Disabilities



This year it's on 3rd December and the theme for the day is "Not All Disabilities are Visible".

The day aims to raise awareness and understanding of disabilities that are not immediately apparent, such as mental illness, chronic pain or fatigue, sight or hearing impairments, diabetes, brain injuries, neurological disorders, and learning differences, among others.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, isolation, disconnection, disrupted routines and diminished services have greatly impacted the lives and mental well-being of people with disabilities.

We should recognise the importance of removing barriers for all people living with disability, both visible and invisible.

For more info: <https://idpwd.org/>

BBC Free TV Licence Campaign

The Silver Voices Campaign against the BBC's decision to charge for the "Free" TV Licence has been drawing great support from Pensioners nationally.

SV has issued this update.... Over 75s - The BBC's 'amnesty' appears to be holding. Some reminders but no red-topped enforcement notices threatening an Official visit. **We've asked the BBC to notify us if the policy changes.**

Under 75s - SV has had disturbing reports of enforcement visits despite lockdown restrictions, with no regard as shielding households. Enforcement letters have threatened visits at any time "Day, Evening - Even Weekends".

If they visit, don't talk to them on the doorstep. Tell them their call is a danger to your health. Close the door politely. Enforcers cannot enter your house or garden.

Silver Voices' Dennis Reed, has written again to the BBC Director General reiterating the above points. If, and when, we get a response, SV members will be notified.

Campaign Publicity - SV has managed to keep this issue in the national media good media coverage. Support for our members continue for as long as necessary.

Sacked at last

It's good to see that Donald Trump has achieved his pledge to "Make America Great Again" He may claim all of the credit for himself, but we have to thank the millions of US citizens who voted him out of Office and out of the White House.

America can begin to be "Great Again" now that he's been dumped. Thanks America, for making the World a much better, safer and saner place.



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Did you manage to fill your time in?

Many of us took up new hobbies or pursuits and our enthusiasm is showing no sign of falling off. We took to walking or cycling as the health experts encouraged us to get outdoors and take more exercise.



The good Spring and early Summer weather sparked a national demand allotments and Councils reported record waiting lists for plots. The old 'wartime spirit' took hold as we found good homegrown vegetables.

On the other hand, garden lovers had a great time. Not a weed in sight! Wonderful, carefully tended floral displays and shrubbery.

As many house-holders took advantage of the enforced free time to catch up with all the wee jobs that they had been putting off for years, DIY stores reported well above-average demands.



Others, took time to de-clutter - to clear out cupboards, lofts, garages and sheds. To get rid of vague rubbish "things that might come in handy". Charity shops were open were inundated with goods. The Council Tips were full to overflowing!

Dress-making, cookery, baking, reading and plain old 'jig-saws'. We soon found there just weren't enough hours in the day!

UNISON - "There for You" in times of difficulty

Readers may recall UNISON's Welfare Service. Did you know it now operates under the title "There For You"? ...

As with the old Welfare Service, if any member who is struggling you just may be able to get help through 'There for You'.

There are many reasons why you may have financial difficulties which have resulted for unexpected reasons, such as :-

● You or your partner suffer a loss of income

- A costly relationship breakdown
- If you have a family bereavement
- If you or your partner suffer from a long illness
- Needing to buy equipment because of a disability;
- You may be caring for someone with special needs or an illness.

There for You can normally help by providing Wellbeing breaks to give welcome relief from stress and respite from

difficult circumstances.

Note - They're unable to offer wellbeing breaks during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The situation is under constant review and they may be able to offer this service in the not too distant future.

For information :-

Contact your branch Welfare Officer or branch Retired Members Secretary
Phone UNISON on 0800 0857 857 or email thereforyou@unison.co.uk for details