



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

October 2017

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about ageing in society.

Life expectancy has been growing steadily for over half a century. In 1951, a man aged 65 years could expect on average to live to the age of 77 years. Today, a baby girl can expect to live to be 94 years and a boy to be 91 years. By 2047 it could be 98 and 95 respectively.

These are facts to be celebrated. However, steps need to be taken to accommodate the changing structure of our society. Retirement should be an increasingly active phase of life where people have opportunities to continue working and volunteering, as well as saving and looking after their health.

The Government is helping improve life for older people in an ageing society by publishing "Fuller Working Lives" and by appointing a Business Champion for Older Workers. Importantly the default retirement age has been abolished so employers can no longer force employees to retire just because they reach the arbitrary age of 65 years. Older people have a wealth of skills and experience and these changes should help unlock them.

Ministers have made the State Pension simpler and fairer to help planning and saving for retirement. Alongside this, reforms will make sure the State Pension remains affordable in the long term and fair between generations, by raising the State Pension age. A regular and structured method for considering future State Pension age changes will help ensure confidence, alongside reforms to workplace pension schemes to help people meet their retirement income expectations.

Finally, the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health co-chair the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing, bringing together representatives from a range of groups representing older people to address the opportunities and challenges of an ageing society.

Once again, many thanks for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY