



NEWS

from Steve Webb MP

Westminster Report on back page



Pension campaign success!



Steve Webb discusses pensions with South Gloucestershire resident Sally Clark. Many other women could gain in the same way.

A local resident has had a big boost to her state pension thanks to a successful campaign by local MP Steve Webb.

Mrs. Sally Clark, who starts to draw her pension later this year, had been told that she would not get a full state pension because she spent time at home when her children were young.

In principle, women who spend time out of paid work because of family responsibilities should have their pension rights protected under a scheme known as 'Home Responsibilities Protection' (HRP) which was introduced in 1978. But Mrs Clark, of Yate, did not appear to have been awarded any HRP.

Contacted Steve

When she heard that her local MP was highlighting the case of women who were missing out, she contacted Steve Webb who raised her case with the National Insurance office.

It emerged that Mrs. Clark should have been awarded HRP but this had never been credited to her pension account.

She has now been told that she will be getting an extra £800 a year in state pension throughout her

retirement because this error has been corrected.

Steve Webb said: "In most cases HRP is awarded automatically without a problem. But I have come across dozens of cases of women who are finding they are not getting what they are entitled to. I was delighted to be able to help Mrs. Clark get what she was entitled to.

Campaign

"I would be happy to hear from any other local resident who spent time away from paid work after 1978 bringing up children and who thinks that her state pension may not have been adjusted to take account of this".

Steve has had several meetings with pensions ministers to raise this issue on the national stage and is seeking to ensure that there is a national campaign to ensure that all such women get the right amount of pension.

Yate Cinema update

The campaign for a cinema for Yate is gathering pace.

After an inevitable delay when the shopping centre changed hands, the new owners are working on plans for the centre and have assured Steve Webb that a cinema is still very much part of their thinking.

More detailed proposals are expected in 2008.

New threat to post offices

South Glos faces a new round of post office closures under new Government plans for the Royal Mail.

Post Office managers will be publishing a list of branches that are under threat in our area later in the year. Although there

will be consultation as to which post offices will close, the strategy of closing thousands more branches has already been signed off by the Government.

Steve said: "Post offices are a lifeline to many of our town and village communities. I very much oppose the policy

of closing more sub post offices. We will take part in the consultation to try to minimize the damage and preserve the best possible network, but I believe that the whole policy is fundamentally flawed".

Steve Webb campaigning to save Alveston Post Office. Other post offices in our towns and villages are under threat because of Government plans.



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