



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Lord Hall of Birkenhead CBE  
Director General  
British Broadcasting Corporation  
Broadcasting House  
Portland Place  
London  
W1A 1AA

Open Correspondence

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Lord Hall of Birkenhead,

I am writing to you as the Member of Parliament for Grantham and Stamford on behalf of my constituents, many of whom are over the age of 75 and have written to me since being elected in December, about their disappointment at the BBC's decision to scrap free TV licenses for most people over the age of 75 from 1st August 2020.

Like those who have written to me over the last 6-7 months I too wish to add my voice in order to urge you to reconsider this decision.

The announcement to postpone this decision back in March when everyone was forced to go into lock down was a welcome one, however even as restrictions are slowly being lifted it is evident that millions of elderly Britons are still being asked to stay at home during the COVID-19 global crisis.

I hope you can understand how poor the timing of this announcement is, with many of my constituents who already feel isolated because of this pandemic, are now faced with the reality of being isolated further.

While I do genuinely welcome the BBC's commitment to protecting the people who would find it most difficult to pay by continuing to cover the licences of those eligible for Pension Credit. This does not adequately cover the many vulnerable pensioners in my area who, while not on Pension Credit, are in receipt of other benefits.

I hope you can see why many of my constituents are feeling more and more disillusioned with the BBC, which pays excessive salaries; with its highest-paid stars and executives averaging more than half a million each with the highest-paid topping nearly £2 million.

It is no surprise then that many of my constituents feel the BBC has become detached from its core viewers. I therefore urge you in the strongest possible terms to reconsider scrapping free TV licenses for over-75s.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and I hope you are keeping well and safe during these difficult times.

With best wishes,

Gareth Davies MP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gareth Davies', written over a large, stylized blue oval.