

Petitioner submission of 30 September 2022

PE1976/A: Backdate council tax discounts for dementia to the date of GP certification

In early 2018 my beautiful wife Margaret was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease the most common form of Dementia.

In December of 2018 I learnt in a chance discussion with Age UK that Margaret was entitled to Attendance Allowance and in February 2019 again by a chance discussion with our frailty nurse that we may be entitled to a 25% discount on our council tax. (The 100% exemption applies to people with dementia living alone).

The council insisted that rather than the date Margaret was certified (diagnosed) by her GP as having Severe Mental Impairment (SMI) council tax discount would only start from the date Margaret first received Attendance Allowance which was some 10 months later.

I questioned this with our council, Hambleton District Council and wrote to our MP Rishi Sunak.

In January 2020 I appealed to a Valuation Tribunal and in December 2020 to the High Court.

The High Court Judge confirmed that the laws as they stand allow councils to hold back on council tax discounts and exemptions until the date of receipt of Attendance Allowance, or in the case of people below pensionable age either DLA or PIP. The high court judge acknowledged that I was not appealing for any financial benefit to myself as the court fees outweighed the backdated claim.

This led to my 3 online GOV.UK petitions and a paper petition being presented to the House of Commons on the 15th June 2022.

Even though my wife is unable to hold any conversation we have worked alongside many charities and have appeared on TV and Radio together

with articles in National and Local Press. These include the second part of the BBC 2 documentary "Inside the Care Crisis with Ed Balls", on 3 occasions on GB News Television and I took part in an interview with David Lammy on LBC radio.

With Council Tax being a devolved issue any changes in the law within Scotland requires the approval of the Scottish Parliament.

In the process of preparing for the High Court appearance I undertook a Freedom of Information request.

As a small correction to the previous action section in my petition, the 22 councils not backdating to the date of GP Certification should have been effecting 18,947 and not 20,253 households as stated.

The figure of "over 600,000 people in the UK who receive care at home" is taken from the research undertaken by Kings College London and the London School of Economics for the Alzheimer's Society where they estimate that over 1 Million people in the UK now have dementia and that 61% are living at home.

<https://www.dementiastatistics.org/statistics/prevalence-projections-in-the-uk/>

I hope that this information will add to the understanding of the previous action and background information and I apologise for my error on the figures.