



Will it be happy for older people, people needing help at home or care home places? Will it be happy for the tens of thousands of family carers in Devon?

For most elderly people, people with dementia, and those who care for them, in Devon and across the UK, did anything change, or dare I ask, improve for you in 2019?

This time last year I wrote; 'Sea Change' and spoke of Brexit and the anticipated help from central government for social care. NOTHING has changed.

I wrapped my Christmas Presents in GREEN PAPER this year as still the long-awaited one from the government on social care has yet to materialise. Once again, swept under the carpet in the myriad of disarray that our once great nation is facing.

The smoke and mirrors of Brexit have only served to hide the hidden struggles of thousands of elderly people for yet another year. I don't want to appear to be a grumpy what's-it, but I am feeling a tad annoyed (understatement of 2020).

Family care givers are still insulted by the menial sum paid to them, whilst saving government coffers billions each year. Incontinence pads are still rationed resulting in unnecessary suffering with urine burns and pressure ulcers costing millions. Then, proposals from government who dared to endanger the legacy of the free TV license for our over 75's. Many may agree that 75 is now the new 60, but for our very elderly, and people living alone – television is their solitude and company.

How dare they challenge this? The only voices many people hear for days are on the television; short-sighted I say. Raise the qualifying age, means test, but don't charge everyone.

Technology continues to blunder forwards; seen as the only solution to the decline in our care workforce and maybe it will prove to be.

We need more care staff than



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Happy New Year - Really?

ever to meet the burgeoning need of our older generations. Brexit has kindly seen off many care workers from foreign shores, their former countries now more economically buoyant, and more welcoming than some in the UK. A disrespectful, misguided and an entirely shortsighted way to treat people... in my opinion.

Can I find any positives? Yes. Devon itself is full of bright fresh ideas at grass roots level. Caring passionate individuals are working tirelessly to make a difference, which eventually should result in better lives for older people, not just here but further afield too.

2020 – an even number.

Time for hope, hope that the government might finally see the effects of their previous policy decisions, the real cost of austerity and recognise that we need improvements to social care provisions, sooner rather than later.

I have been saying for so for years and shared my concern with decision makers. Still we wait. Our elderly need support, care and dignity. It is their right and not a luxury.

Happy New Year, whatever it brings?!! – I bet we still don't get the GREEN PAPER though. ♦

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ABOVE:
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