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# New calls to keep State Pension age at 66 ahead of planned official retirement rise starting in 2026

The State Pension age is due to rise from 66 to 67 between 2026 and 2028.

LIFESTYLE By **Linda Howard** Money and Consumer Writer

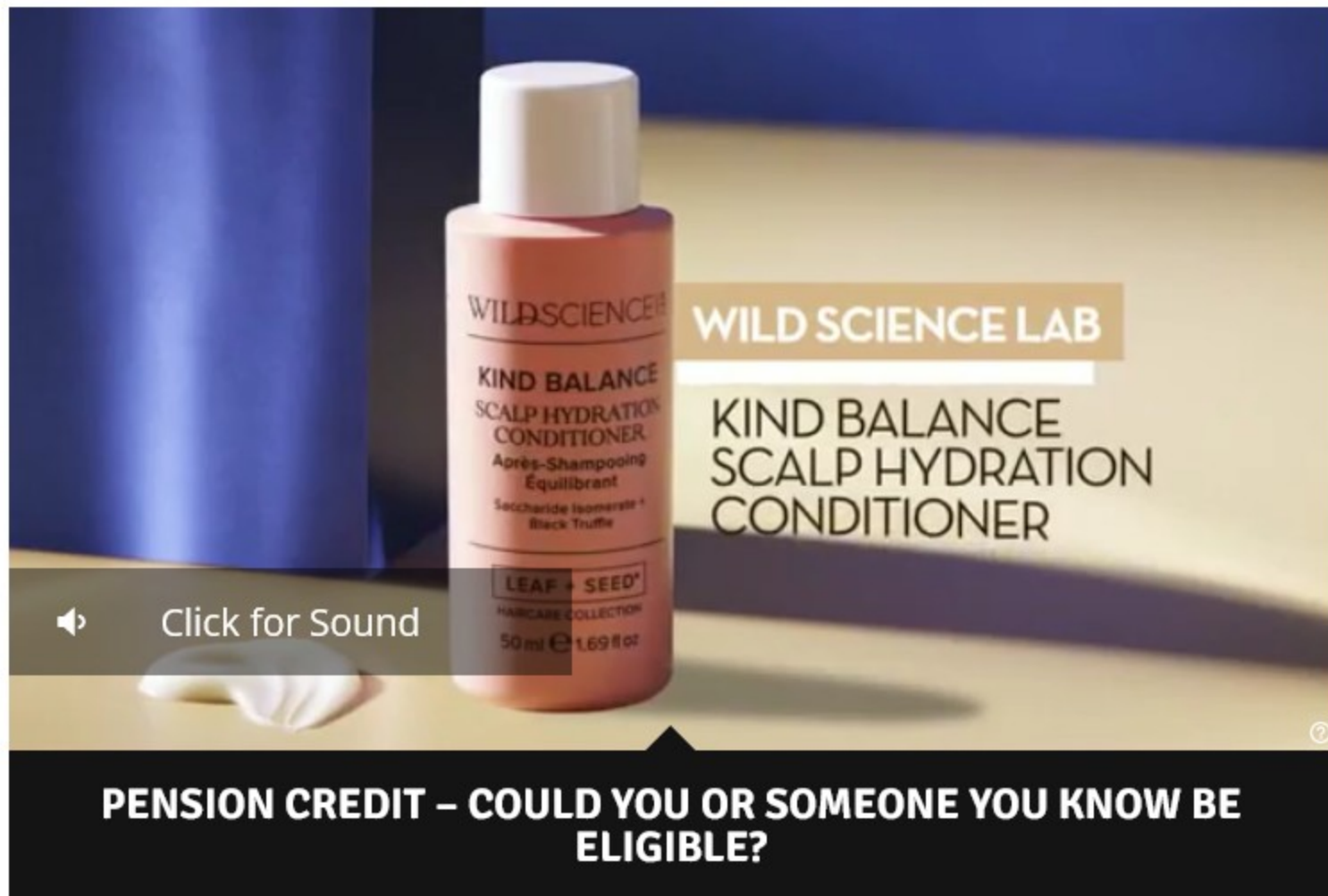
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A new [online petition](#) is calling on the UK Government to stop scheduled increases to the State Pension age and keep it at 66 due to declining life expectancy in Scotland and the rest of the UK. The next planned rise is to 67, which will be phased in between 2026 and 2028.

The [increase to 67](#) has been in legislation since 2014, but there had been speculation earlier this year it would increase to 68 earlier than expected in the mid 2040s. However, in March, Work and Pensions Secretary [Mel Stride MP](#) told the Commons that this move would not be decided until a

new review is conducted two years after the next general election takes place in 2024.

The 'Stop the planned increase in the State Pension age, leave it at 66' petition has been created and posted on the official petitions-parliament website by Clive John Chessman where it has already received more than 3,850 signatures of support from across the country. At 10,000 signatures, the UK Government will respond to its proposal.

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The petition states: "We want the Government to reverse plans to increase the age at which people become eligible for the State Pension, first to 67, then to 68. We believe the State Pension age should remain 66.

"The planned increase was based on life expectancy increases, but in Scotland life expectancy has decreased and in the rest of the UK has not gone up as expected."

Planned increases to the State Pension age must be communicated at least 10 years in advance. This could potentially see a rise to 68 occur as early as 2036 - if the review after the general election finds good reason to do so.

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At the time of the announcement to delay a review of the rise to 68, former pensions minister Baroness Ros Altmann said: "The Government is right to recommend a wait-and-see approach, with further studies to understand better the full impact of both Covid - and the consequential backlogs in the healthcare system - on previous forecasts for life expectancy.

"With doubts having been raised about the trajectory of life expectancy forecasts, as well as the evidence of huge differentials across the country in healthy life expectancy, I do not believe it is safe to accelerate the rise in State Pension age unless it also introduces more flexibility to the starting age."



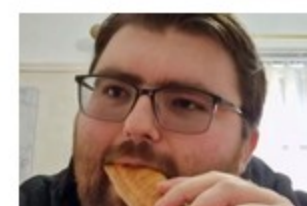
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Lady Altmann added: "Cutting costs would be the only reason to press ahead with accelerating the state pension age timetable and I am pleased to see this factor has not overridden social concerns."

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