

## Sir Roger Gale takes our healthcare and pension concerns to Michael Gove

**Michael Gove responded to Sir Roger's appeal with this offer to meet:**

*Thank you for your letter to me of 10 October, and to the Prime Minister of 18 October.*

*In these letters you raise important issues about the rights and protections of UK Nationals living in the EU, for which you continue to be a strong advocate. I share your concern that we must strive to protect our nationals, particularly elderly pensioners who have chosen to retire in EU Member States.*

*The specific issues you raise regarding the uprating of the UK state pension and reciprocal healthcare for UK Nationals living in the EU are complex and warrant a detailed discussion.*

*I would like to invite you to a meeting next week to discuss these issues in greater detail. I will invite relevant officials from across government so we can seek greater clarity in answer to the points you have raised.*

*I know that you asked the Prime Minister for reassurance on these very important issues - I hope that this meeting will afford us a chance to explore your concerns and provide the assurance you are looking for.*

*My office will contact yours to find a convenient time for you.*

*With every good wish,*

*Rt Hon Michael Gove MP Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster*

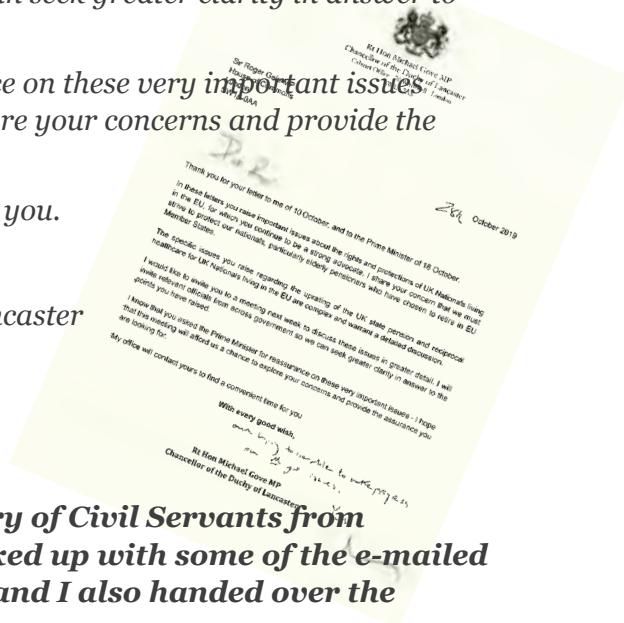
**Sir Roger has since reported that the meeting has taken place. This is his update:**

*I met, yesterday, with Michael Gove and a battery of Civil Servants from DEXEU, DWP and Health. I set out the stall, backed up with some of the e-mailed information that you have sent me individually and I also handed over the British In Europe briefing .*

*I don't think that anyone has been left in any doubt about what is required: It is clear that the "Deal" and "No Deal" scenarios are very different at present and what I am trying to secure is protection of rights under either. We now have to await "the letter" – and goodness knows when that might arrive under the present circumstances – to see what, if any, progress has been made.*

*I have, though, stressed the point that what is needed is full clarification, where previously there has been confusion, in terms that a bear of small brain – me – can understand without gaining a degree in rocket science first! That, at least, might offer some comfort if only so that everyone knows precisely where they stand.*

**Lets hope Sir Roger's effort on our behalf pays dividendends!**



## .... meanwhile, a letter from the Lords also seeks answers from the Government

A few days ago, Jeremy Morgan representing British in Europe and all our interests, gave evidence to the House of Lords Justice sub-Committee, along with written evidence.

You can read the evidence document from this link: <https://www.ecreu.com/pdfs/bie-submission-oct2019.pdf>

Unfortunately, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State For Exiting the European Union, James Duddridge MP, failed to attend, which has resulted in the EU Justice Sub-Committee Chair, Lord Morris sending him a letter seeking answers to matters left outstanding at the hearing.

In particular, the letter asks for assurances:

- That UK citizens who wish, or need, to return to the UK at any point in the future should be entitled to do so, with their families, as is the situation at present;
- That the current arrangements for student fees and finance for UK individuals resident in the EU at the time of Brexit should be continued for a period of 15 years;
- That the UK should continue to fund healthcare for those to whom it is liable at Brexit until new agreements are made (and in any case until the end of 2020); and,
- That it should commit to uprate the pensions of UK nationals living in the EU for as long as they continue to live there.

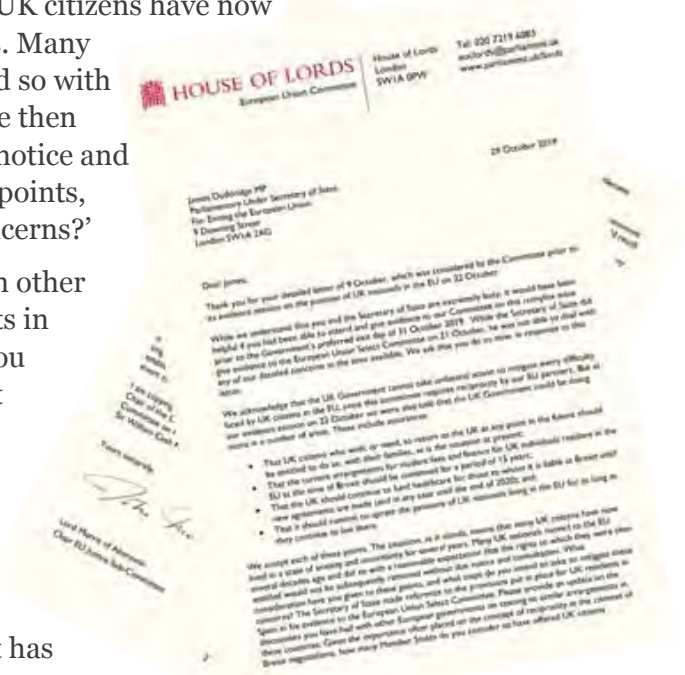
It also asks: 'The situation, as it stands, means that many UK citizens have now lived in a state of anxiety and uncertainty for several years. Many UK nationals moved to the EU several decades ago and did so with a reasonable expectation that the rights to which they were then entitled would not be subsequently removed without due notice and consultation. What consideration have you given to these points, and what steps do you intend to take to mitigate these concerns?'

It asks for 'an update on the discussions you have had with other European governments on coming to similar arrangements in these countries,' and asks 'how many Member States do you consider to have offered UK citizens something equivalent to what you have offered EU citizens in the UK (ie. the EU Settlement Scheme)?'

The Government is also questioned on issues such as the future co-ordination of social security and healthcare entitlements with the EU 27.

It concludes by mentioning evidence that the Government has a breakdown, by country, of what assurances have been given to UK citizens in each Member State and says: "It is imperative that we are provided with a country by country analysis, preferably in the form of a single document, setting out information on health, social security and other reciprocal rights to event of a no deal Brexit."

Lord Morris's letter was copied to Michael Gove; Yvette Cooper, Chair of the Commons Home Affairs Committee; Harriet Harman, Chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights; Hilary Benn, Chair of Exiting the EU Committee; and Sir William Cash, Chair of the European Scrutiny Committee



## Meanwhile, The Good Ship Brexit Ploughs On.....

**So another General election is set for December 12th. Meanwhile we can all look forward to another New Year with yet more worry and uncertainty. The whole Brexit saga is like a supertanker - it takes miles to change course or come to a stop.**

It seems no matter how many times Boris loses in the Commons or the courts, nothing will stop him or push him off course.

But he has grudgingly been forced to heave to, conform to the will of Parliament and accept the EU extension. So now we can all look forward to a few more months of the same - the same arguing; the same untruths; the same total disregard for our wellbeing and future lives.

It has been a couple of months since our last newsletter, as I am being reminded by members concerned that we may have given up.



We haven't ! - the fact is our situation has been changing almost by the minute, so the best way to keep up-to-date is by following TV and on-line news. Meanwhile, our colleagues at British in Europe have been busy, putting our case to the highest levels Government, the EU and anyone of influence who will listen.

Trouble is, we have been doing this now for three years yet still we get ignored and trampled on by those making the ultimate decisions. It seems no amount of protest, open letters and appeals for fairness and common sense have the slightest impact at the top.

For example, everyone covered by the UK Government S1 healthcare scheme will have received the letter from the NHS telling them in no uncertain terms that 'The UK is leaving the European Union (EU) on 31 October 2019' and if there is no deal, their healthcare will end after six months.

This was my response (by post and email) to Mr Michael Brodie, the Chief Executive, NHS Business Service Authority, who signed it:

*Dear Mr Brodie,*

*I am in receipt of your letter 'Your Healthcare after Brexit' (23 September 2019) as are many of the 11,000 plus British Citizen members of our organisation. Your letter has caused considerable anxiety – not surprising as 82% percent of them have listed healthcare as their primary worry about Brexit. ECREU has repeatedly made this very clear to the Government through Select Committee hearings and as written evidence.*

*Many of our members have complained about your letter and I feel compelled to write this open letter on their behalf and from my own, personal point of view.*

*So you can understand our position very clearly, since moving to France ten years ago, my wife has had two sessions of Chemotherapy for non-Hodgkin lymphoma. She also had her spleen removed leaving her with no immunity which has resulted in repeated urgent admissions to hospital with serious and life threatening infections. She also had her gall bladder removed, has a Colostomy, and later this month, will have a problem vein removed from her leg. She will be totally dependent on medication and medical supplies for the remainder of her life.*

*Given your post-Brexit advice, perhaps you can explain how, as a not particularly fit 70 year old state pensioner with a very small private top-up, she can make - or afford - repeated visits to UK for treatment including weekly injections to correct blood deficiency, and to collect repeat prescriptions, or afford private insurance cover in France assuming she would qualify with her existing conditions?*

*more.....*



*Moving back to the UK is out of the question for us and thousands of others. Everything we own is tied up in our property which is worth much less than the home we sold in the UK. Regardless of which, property here can take years to sell – if at all – especially after Brexit has killed off all the UK buying demand.*

*I am sure you will now understand why my wife – along with thousands of other British citizens – interprets your letter as a ‘death sentence’.*

*Also, my wife and I spent our entire working lives in the UK paying our taxes and NI. Please let me know where our contributions will go once you stop paying our benefits and healthcare.*

*Finally, given that Parliament has rejected a ‘no deal’ scenario and that the Prime Minister is bound by law to seek an extension if he cannot get a deal, why is your NHS department writing to thousands of citizens telling them we will leave on 31st October?*

*It is acceptable for you to write giving health advice in the correct context, but it is not at all acceptable for you to be complicit in using the NHS as a vehicle to peddle Government propaganda.*

*Yours sincerely*

### **This was the emailed response:**

*Dear Mr Spokes,*

*I’m writing to you in response to the email you sent to our CEO Michael Brodie on 27th September.*

*Thank you for taking the time to write to us.*

*I have referred your query to our colleagues at the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).*

*Unfortunately I’m unable to provide a timeframe for this response but please be assured that we’ll be in contact with you as soon as they get back to us.*

*Many thanks*

*Helen Clapperton*

*Personal Assistant to*

*Martin Kelsall, Director of Primary Care Services and Darren Curry, Chief Digital Officer*

### **You will probably not be surprised to learn that after almost a month, I am still waiting.**

This Government has used us to create fear and panic in its attempts to frighten the EU into believing there will be no deal if it does not get it’s way.

Meanwhile, Brexit ploughs on like a ship full-ahead with no-one on the bridge save for a would-be Capt Queeg at the helm.....



.....Pass the strawberries someone please!

Capt Queeg (Humphrey Bogart), the paranoid fictional captain in *The Caine Mutiny* - 1954



By Columbia Pictures (film trailer) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2McErathhsg> (Frame location from uncopyrighted 1954 trailer) Per "WikiProject-Film Talk Archive #12 (\$10): Free Images for Films" (April, 2007), under US Copyright Law (Title 17 USC): "Trailers are considered to have been "published" without copyright notice, so any content that was first released to audiences in the form of the trailer (from before 1964) is considered free. In other words, those brief parts of the film constituting the trailer content are in the public domain. Of course, it doesn't matter whether a screenshot is physically taken from the film itself or the trailer, so long as there is solid documentation that the particular frame was a part of the original trailer." See also HERE, PD-US, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=49739689>

## Happy Christmas – it's a December Election!

All general elections tend to be labelled as the most important, but December 12th will be one the most significant for decades.

This could be our only chance to get rid of a Government which has made our lives a misery for the past three years and even now seems hell bent on destroying the lives of anyone who exercised their freedom to live where they want in the EU.

### Your Vote will count....

If you still qualify (you have not lived outside the UK for more than 15 years) then it is essential you have your say.

### If you are a UK citizen living in the EU, you must register to vote every year.

If you are not sure you are registered, contact the local authority where you last lived without delay.

Some local authorities have already warned voters in the EU that they may not have sufficient time to process postal votes for an early election. If this applies to you - or you are concerned that your postal votes may not arrive on time anyway - then apply to vote by proxy. All the details can be found on-line from this Government web site: <https://t.co/mQr7vwoXVc?amp=1> Your Proxy does not have to live in the same constituency and could request their own postal vote on your behalf.

***Don't leave it until the last minute – do it now!***

## Money Talks....

Why were Boris and the dedicated 'leave at any cost' brigade so insistent on the October 31 leave date 'do or die' while refusing to drop 'no deal'?



An interesting theory came to light in the pages of an online platform for journalists, Byline Times.

They looked into the background of financiers and funds which backed Boris's leadership and the Leave campaigns, finding that by 'short selling', they could make millions betting that the date would be the 31st. The figures involved are mind boggling. One backer was said to have already made £350m overnight by speculating on sterling and moving in gold when the EU referendum result caused the pound to fall.

They also report shorting on an anticipated drop in Sterling on October 31st. That did not happen, but the huge amounts of cash involved raised questions. You can read the detail in Byline Times (30 Sept) from here:

<https://bylinetimes.com/2019/09/26/cabinet-ethics-probe-into-johnsons-hedge-fund-backers/>

Before anyone cries 'fake news', check out this Guardian link in which former Chancellor, Philip Hammond, claims that Boris Johnson's hedge fund backers would win "billions of pounds" from a no-deal Brexit.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/live/2019/sep/30/firms-uk-economy-confidence-brexit-trade-war-business-live>

**As we worry about the loss of our measly annual pension increase, others stand to make millions from anticipating plummeting share prices and exchange rates. No prizes for guessing that our Government ruled out an inquiry.**

'Shorting' or 'short selling' involves fund managers or hedge funds borrowing shares and immediately selling them at today's price, while anticipating a future fall in value when they can be bought back at a lower price, before handing them back to the lender. Given that many thousands of shares worth millions can be involved, the profit (difference between selling and buy-back price) can be substantial.

***Of course, like any bet, it can go wrong..... unless the cause of an anticipated drop in value can be assured.***

## BiE Groups Meet Hugh Elliot to Discuss the Citizens' Rights of Britons in Spain

***Last week Margaret Hales, our ECREU representative in Spain, together with EuroCitizens and Brexpat's Hear Our Voice had another useful meeting with Ambassador Hugh Elliot and his team.***



We had a positive discussion on 'Deal' and 'No Deal' scenarios. The most reassuring point was that contacts between the British and Spanish governments are proceeding well on key issues relating to citizens rights, despite all the political uncertainties.

We brought up the several 'unfortunate declarations' by UK politicians (such as Brandon Lewis and Priti Patel) and the sometimes contradictory messages from different government departments! The Embassy team acknowledged our concerns and reassured us that they have been passed to Westminster. They advised that we focus on the country-specific Living in Spain Guides due to the differing circumstances in each EU-27 host country.



The Ambassador said the FCO and Spanish government are working closely on clarifying reciprocity on citizens' rights, which would be crucial in any "No Deal" even though the two systems are not symmetrical. *This is good and important news.*

Foundations are also being laid in a positive way about reciprocity arrangements in the event of a 'No Deal'. *More good news!*

In addition the Embassy said they will work with the Spanish government on key messages for Brits in Spain and we will have these to send out shortly.

On a practical level, the Spanish government has put extra staff into Registration Offices in provinces like Alicante. If there are any problems in getting appointments to register or, if registered, in receiving S1 healthcare, we should contact our local consulate.

Note....there is still a large group of unregistered Brits who remain confused about the documentation they, and/or their dependents, need to have (eg padrón/NIE/residencia). The Embassy will study new ways of communicating with them, eg focusing on the need to register children as well.

We discussed citizens' rights in a 'Deal' scenario and the need to clarify Spanish plans for dealing with Britons during and after the transition period. We will be a distinct group of third-country nationals, but we need clarity about alternative statuses (like EU family member and EU long-term resident).

We pointed out our loss of rights even with a 'Deal' as a result of the end of our freedom of movement within the EU-27, cross-border service provision, etc., But we also lose rights 'within the 'grant' of the UK- such as pensions uprating, home university fees and the rights of returning UK citizens with EU family.

The EU is aligning us with other third-country nationals but the UK government is equating us with other Brits outside the EU.

***There is a failure to recognise that we are a finite and distinct group of people, who have built our lives on EU citizenship and so must be treated differently. Hugh Elliot took this point and would pass our message to London.***

Finally, we briefly discussed HMG communications on voting rights in the December UK elections (for those still eligible) and the most effective way of voting from abroad, which is through proxy votes.

Margaret Hales - [margarethales@ecreu.com](mailto:margarethales@ecreu.com)

*more from Spain.....*

# Living In Spain And Brexit

## Pop-Up Events

A team from the Alicante British Consulate will be at the below locations from 09:30-14:30 on each date.

Anyone can come during these times to ask specific questions about how to prepare for Brexit, how to register as a resident under current guidelines and how to access healthcare in Spain.

### Pop-Up Event Locations:

| Date  | Address  | Time       |
|---|--|------------|
| <b>BENIDORM</b><br>Tuesday 5th<br>November      | <b>El Raco Camping</b><br>Av. Dr. Severo Ochoa, 35, 03503<br>Benidorm, Alicante                                  | 9.30:14:30 |
| <b>EL CAMPELLO</b><br>Wednesday 6th<br>November | <b>Mandarina English Garden<br/>Coffee Shop</b><br>Carrer Vicent Blasco i Ibáñez, 03560 El<br>Campello, Alicante | 9.30:14:30 |
| <b>CAMPOSOL</b><br>Wednesday 13th<br>November   | <b>Consum Supermarket</b><br>Urbanización Camposol<br>CP: 30870, Mazarrón  | 9.30:14:30 |
| <b>ALCALALI</b><br>Wednesday 20th<br>November   | <b>Alcalali Drop-In Centre</b><br>Centro Civico.<br>Carrer Valent. Alcalali. 03728, Alicante                     | 9.30:14:30 |
| <b>SAN JAVIER</b><br>Wednesday 4th<br>December  | <b>Overseas Supermarket</b><br>Calle Quevedo, 17, 30730 San Javier,<br>Murcia                                    | 9.30:14:30 |





ECREU joined with other support groups to establish British in Europe (BiE) at the start of negotiations to provide a single and coordinated voice for all its member groups.

BiE is made up from team members of Citizens' Rights groups and Facebook support groups in the EU. Their work has been instrumental in focussing the minds of MEPs, MPs and key players in favour of supporting our rights.

As a member of ECREU, BiE is working for you, so please support this work by following our requests to lobby your MP and MEP. You can also help by donating to BiE. Please click [HERE](#) if you are able to help.

### ***Need to contact someone at ECREU?***

If an email address is not shown in this newsletter, please email to: [contact@ecreu.com](mailto:contact@ecreu.com)

Italy- [italy@ecreu.com](mailto:italy@ecreu.com)

Spain - [spain@ecreu.com](mailto:spain@ecreu.com)

**At the time of writing, ECREU has more than 11,100 members in 28 EU countries:**

|                |         |             |                |
|----------------|---------|-------------|----------------|
| Austria        | Estonia | Italy       | Portugal       |
| Belgium        | Finland | Latvia      | Romania        |
| Bulgaria       | France  | Lithuania   | Slovakia       |
| Croatia        | Germany | Luxembourg  | Slovenia       |
| Cyprus         | Greece  | Malta       | Spain          |
| Czech Republic | Hungary | Netherlands | Sweden         |
| Denmark        | Ireland | Poland      | United Kingdom |

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