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# Oh, I Wish I'd Looked After My Rights

Positive images festival competition

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## Oh, I Wish I'd Looked After My Rights

*With full credit to Pam Ayres 'Oh, I wish I'd Looked after my teeth.'*

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Oh, I wish I'd looked after my rights  
And gone out to vote when I could,  
The dates I ignored because I was bored,  
Oh, I wish I'd looked after my rights.  
And spotted the dangers ahead,  
If I'd raised my head from my screen  
I could have been keen,  
more have done and said.  
Imagine the manifestos I could have read,  
Oh, I wish I'd looked after my rights.

I wish I looked after my rights,  
And signed a petition or four  
Been ready to raise my hand in support from the floor,  
Taken part in the battle and the fights,  
Strode along on a march,  
Carried a banner and done so much more.  
I wish I'd that much braver,  
To be engaged and alert, to give some of my day  
To speak to campaigning door knockers,  
To discuss issues of the time: NHS, Brexit, and crime  
When I think of the times I ignored, and others politically engaged had implored,  
All those suffragettes I disrespected when voting I neglected  
Oh, I wish I'd looked after my rights  
My mother, told me 'If you got a vote, you got a voice.'  
I admit I cared little about democratic choice,  
I liked voting all right,  
I voted for Strictly, X-Factor, Love Island without fail each night  
But go out to vote?  
I casually threw away that right, like last year's tatty old coat.  
If only I'd known I was paving the way,  
To oppression and no expression or say,  
Cruel Tyranny and the rule of law,  
forbidden to assemble, curfews and locking of doors

I look back and admit that for democracy I pine,  
Regrets haunt me in this constricted life of mine.

How I laughed at my parents' warning,  
Unless I voted, I'd see terrible days dawning.

But now comes the reckonin'

Hard Times are beckonin'

Oh, I wish I'd looked after my rights.