



CSPA WEST MERCIA GROUP NEWSLETTER NUMBER 4 - WINTER 2022

CSPA West Mercia Group Officers – 2022/23

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Secretary: David Humphreys (also covers Membership)	01562 631188	dnhumphreys@gmail.com

CSPA West Mercia Group

CSPA West Mercia Group came into being in February 2022. The Group currently has 900 members residing in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire. CSPA nationally has 47,000 members.

Our next West Mercia Group meeting is on **Monday 5 December 2022 at 2.00pm at The Quaker Meeting House in Sansome Walk, Worcester** (round the corner from Worcester Foregate Street Station). Everyone is welcome to attend. It will be preceded by a light pub lunch from 12 noonish at the nearby Postal Order. Amongst the items to be discussed at the meeting will be the dates and venues for our quarterly meetings in March (AGM), June, September and December 2023.

Our plan to have occasional Zoom gatherings in addition to the in-person meetings hasn't yet taken off. It may now have to await the New Year. The Zoom link will be sent in good time to people in our 140-strong email group, who receive additional information on issues of interest to older people. **Anyone who wishes to sign up to the email group should send their email address to the Group Secretary.**

If you can't attend one of our Group meetings but wish us to consider an issue of concern to older people, please contact one of the Group Officers beforehand.

Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance West Mercia Group
David Humphreys (Group Secretary) Telephone: 01562 631188 and 07906264335
Email: dnhumphreys@gmail.com

Payment of Civil Service Pensions – MyCSP

MyCSP pays your Civil Service pension. Its contact details are: MyCSP, PO Box 2017, Liverpool, L69 2BU; Phone: 0300 123 6666 (Mon to Fri - 0830 to 1800); Email: contactcentre@mycsp.co.uk; MyCSP website: <http://www.mycsp.co.uk>.

For more information about the civil service pension scheme, including “what to expect” guides, the scheme website is: <http://civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk>. **The scheme website will also show you how to register for the Civil Service Pension Portal, which will give you online access to your pension information.**

CSPA National AGM – October 2022

After an absence of 3 years, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the in-person CSPA National AGM was held on 12-13 October 2022 at Chesford Grange Hotel, near Kenilworth. The National AGM is the sovereign, democratic, decision-making body of CSPA. It elects the National Officers and Executive Council for the coming year, receives the annual report and statement of accounts, and determines our future policies and priorities.

Our Treasurer, Vic Reed, represented West Mercia Group at the National AGM. Vic successfully moved our three motions (on Membership Recruitment, Digital Exclusion, and Public Toilets). There will be a report of the National AGM in the forthcoming issue of “The Pensioner” magazine. Vic will give some personal reflections of the National AGM at our Group meeting on 5 December, as will our Secretary, David Humphreys, who attended as the Midlands Regional Representative on the CSPA National Executive Council. (David has now stood down from that senior national role after 6 years’ service).

West Mercia Group Needs You!

Every Group Officer post and (up to) 6 Committee posts are up for election at the AGM in March of each year. Like other voluntary organisations, we rely on volunteers to help out in whatever way possible. Without “new blood” the long-term future of our Group cannot be assured. So, if you’ve got a little bit of time and some interest in older persons’ issues, we can put that to good use. If you need to know more, contact any of the Group Officers.

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The Charity for Civil Servants (CfCS)

CfCS, formerly called the Civil Service Benevolent Fund, helps retired, current, and former civil servants with whatever problems they may have. Its vision is of a lifelong civil service community - of people offering effective support for each other when life takes a turn for the worse.

The help includes financial assistance and a range of services, including help with bereavement, residential care, relationships, caring, dementia, long-term illness, and emergencies.

CfCS works with specialist organisations – including Macmillan, Dementia UK and Relate – and signposts other sources of advice when appropriate.

Visit its website www.foryoubyyou.org.uk or call its confidential helpline on 0800 056 2424. CfCS is **not** a membership organisation, so all retired, serving or former civil servants can apply for its help. We plan to have a CfCS speaker at a future Group meeting.

National Pensioners' Convention (NPC)

CSPA is affiliated to the **National Pensioners' Convention**. The NPC is the largest pensioners organisation in the UK. It campaigns for and promotes the welfare and interests of all pensioners, as a way of securing dignity, respect and financial security in retirement. It organises rallies and lobbies of MPs, leads delegations to Parliament and makes submissions to Government on policies affecting older people. NPC has a Biennial Delegate Conference which met on in March 2022 to elect the national officers and discuss its policies for the coming 2 years. NPC also stages an annual 2-day "Pensioners' Convention" in June in Blackpool.

We receive several printed copies of the NPC's monthly bulletin "Campaign". It is impracticable and too expensive to post it individually to our Group members. Visit the NPC website at <https://www.npcuk.org> to receive the bulletin electronically. The latest edition of Campaign includes articles about the call for an Older People's Commissioner in England; the State Pension "Triple Lock"; the threat to the "Meals on Wheels" service; and the Fabian Society's study into a "Roadmap for Social Care".

West Mercia Group is proud to be affiliated to NPC's regional organisation, the **West Midlands Pensioners Convention (WMPC)**. We send at least one delegate to their monthly meetings in Birmingham. WMPC's informative website is at <https://wmpc.org.uk>, and it produces a quarterly newsletter. Its Facebook page is at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/7125023377569919>.

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CSPA Membership Offers and Services

The main CSPA offers and services are:

- **financial planning advice** from Hanson Wealth.
- Motor Source is a competitive **car purchase and leasing service**.
- MyCarNeedsA gives access to over **4000 vetted garages**.
- **CSIS Home and Motor insurance** and the new **CSIS Travel Insurance**
- prepaid **My Cashback cards** provide between 3% and 15% cashback discounts on purchases from M&S, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Boots, Argos, B&Q, Homebase, and Curry's/PC World.
- **audiology and hearing services** provided by Hearing Star
- Lyons Davidson - phone 01752 300 584 - provide **free legal advice**
- discounted **English Heritage** membership
- discounted **Lost Luggage Protection scheme**.
- BC Technologies provide **free computer support**.

Some offers are accessed online, but many can still be accessed by phone. Hearing Star, for example, is available on 0800 0323 771. Contact the Group Secretary for help in accessing any of these offers and services, which can be found on the national website at <https://www.cspa.co.uk> and in "The Pensioner" magazine.

Your CSPA Group - Use It or Lose It!

West Mercia Group brings together 900 local CSPA members, with a view to stimulating interest in and support for CSPA aims. We meet quarterly in various locations, issue a quarterly Newsletter, and communicate additionally through a 140-strong email group, and through occasional Zoom gatherings.

Not everyone can go to meetings in our far-flung area. So, if there are local concerns, e.g. bus services, social care, health care, public services such as libraries and public toilets - please contact one of the Group Officers.

Everyone can extol the virtues of CSPA membership to all our retired civil and public service colleagues. The competitive premium of our Travel Insurance Scheme will save them more than the small annual subscription to join CSPA. Download an application form at <https://www.cspa.co.uk/> and Freepost it to CSPA HQ in Croydon. Or call 020 8688 8418 for a membership pack. Soon, online membership applications will be possible.

If you believe the West Mercia Group can do something differently/better to stimulate local interest and/or attendance at meetings, please tell us.

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