



## CSPA WEST MERCIA GROUP NEWSLETTER NUMBER 5 - SPRING 2023

### CSPA West Mercia Group Officers – 2022/23

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Treasurer: <b>Victor Reed</b>	01905 641138	<a href="mailto:victorandedna@gmail.com">victorandedna@gmail.com</a>
Secretary: <b>David Humphreys</b> (also covers Membership)	01562 631188	<a href="mailto:dnhumphreys@gmail.com">dnhumphreys@gmail.com</a>

### How West Mercia Group Operates

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

Our next West Mercia Group meeting is on **Monday 20 March 2023 at 2.00pm at The Quaker Meeting House in Sansome Walk, Worcester** (round the corner from Worcester Foregate Street Station). It will be preceded by a light pub lunch from 12 noonish at The Crown in Broad Street. We meet again on **Wednesday 22 March 2023 at 1.30pm at Shrewsbury United Reform, Coleham Head**. These two meetings will constitute our Group AGM, when will elect our Group Officers and the Accounts Auditor for the coming year and review the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2022. There is more about the AGM overleaf, as well as future meeting dates.

Our plan to have occasional Zoom gatherings in addition to the in-person meetings will take off after the AGM. The Zoom link will be sent to people in our 140-strong email group. **Anyone who wishes to sign up to our email group should send their email address to the Group Secretary.**

## **Payment of Your Civil Service Pension – 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](mailto:contactcentre@mycsp.co.uk); MyCSP website: <http://www.mycsp.co.uk>.

More information about the civil service pension scheme, including “what to expect” guides, is on: <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.**

If you experience any problems with your pension which MyCSP can't or won't resolve, please contact the Group Secretary for help and advice.

## **West Mercia Group Annual General Meeting 2023**

Each Group Officer post, the Accounts Examiner and (up to) 6 Committee posts are up for election at the AGM meetings on 20 and 22 March 2023. We will also receive, and hopefully ratify, the Annual Statement for Accounts for 2022.

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.

Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings. If you cannot attend either of the AGM meetings in March, but have a question or concern, please don't hesitate to tell the Group Secretary so that he can share it with the meetings.

## **Dates for your 2023 Diary**

After the Group AGM in March, we will meet on:

- **Monday 26 June** at Eignbrook United Reformed Church, Hereford
- **Wednesday 28 June** at Wellington Methodist Church
- **Monday 18 September** at the Quaker Meeting House, Worcester
- **Wednesday 20 September** at Shrewsbury United Reformed Church
- **Monday 11 December 2023** at the Quaker Meeting House, Worcester.

Our meetings in Hereford and Worcester begin at 2pm, and those in Shrewsbury and Wellington begin at 1.30pm. The meetings are conducted fairly informally and last no more than 2 hours. They end with a refreshing cup of tea or coffee.

CSPA West Mercia Group

David Humphreys (Group Secretary) Telephone: 01562 631188 and 07906264335

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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 other 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](http://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 are eligible to apply for its help. We hope to have a CfCS speaker at one of our Group meetings this year.

## **National Pensioners' Convention (NPC)**

CSPA is affiliated to the **National Pensioners' Convention**, 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. NPC organises rallies, and lobbies of MPs, and makes submissions to Government on policies affecting older people. It has a Biennial Delegate Conference, which last met in March 2022 to elect the national officers and determine its policies for the coming 2 years. NPC also stages an annual 2-day "Pensioners' Convention" in June in Blackpool.

NPC's monthly bulletin "**Campaign**" is sent by the Group Secretary to the 140 members of our email group. Anyone else can visit the NPC website at <https://www.npcuk.org> to receive it. The latest edition covers Dignity Action Day on 1 February; the leaked plans to advance by several years the date when State Pension age will reach 68; the Prepayment Meter scandal; the demonstrations seeking an end to Winter Excess Deaths; the threat to charge £20 to people who visit a hospital A&E instead of a GP, and £10 for missed GP appointments; and the impact of closure of High Street banks and ATMs.

Our 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 membership offers and services are:

- **financial planning advice** by Lighthouse (08000 85 85 90)
- 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** by Hearing Star (0800 0323 771)
- Lyons Davidson solicitors (01752 300 584) for **free legal advice**
- discounted **English Heritage** membership (0370 333 1181)
- discounted **Lost Luggage Protection scheme** (TRACE ME Smart ID)
- BC Technologies provide **free computer support** (01369 706656).

Some offers are accessed online, but many can still be accessed by phone. Contact the Group Secretary if you need help in accessing any of these offers and services, which can be found in the members' area of the national website at <https://www.cspa.co.uk> and in "The Pensioner" magazine.

## **CSPA - 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's aims. We meet quarterly in various locations, issue a quarterly Newsletter, communicate additionally through our 140-strong email group, and through occasional Zoom gatherings. We know that not everyone can attend 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 a Group Officer.

CSPA is a membership organisation. **Please extol the virtues of CSPA membership to all your retired civil and public service colleagues.** The competitive premium of the CSIS Travel Insurance will save them more than the modest subscription to CSPA! Prospective members can 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. Or join online.

If you think our Group can do things differently/better to stimulate local interest and/or attendance at meetings, please tell us. Likewise, if you think that CSPA nationally can do more and better, don't hesitate to tell us that too.

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