

Dear Member



Welcome to the Autumn/Winter newsletter. This issue focuses on the reality of civil service pensioner income, pensions uprating, and how we are working in your interest.

#### **CSPA HEAD OFFICE MOVE**

The CSPA HQ have now moved to their new home in Clapham the PCS Building 160 Falcon Road London SW11 2LN. They have retained the same phone number which is 020 8688 8418.

#### **PENSIONS INCREASES ANNOUNCED IN THE BUDGET**

Civil Service Pensions will rise by a disappointing **1.7%** from 7<sup>TH</sup> April 2025. This will be the lowest year on year increase for over 4 years. This will no doubt disappoint many of our members who are still struggling with higher energy prices from October, set to rise again in January 2025. Additionally, food costs continue to be high, and there will be no Winter Fuel Payment this year to anyone above the low threshold for receiving Tax Credit.

Slightly better news is that State Pensions (currently payable from age 66) will rise by **4.1%** from 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025. This is in line with the Triple Lock.

The Chancellor had said that the annual increase in State Pensions will offset the loss of the Winter Fuel Payment.

Since the rise will equate to £361 if you are on the basic state pension and £472 if you receive the new rate payable since 2016, it is hard to see how the increases will help with steeply rising energy prices and other cost of living increases.

However, you *will* receive your £10.00 “Pensioner Bonus” at Christmas. This payment was first introduced in 1972. It has never been updated. If it had risen in line with inflation, it would be worth £115.

### **AVERAGE CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS ARE MUCH LOWER THAN THE MEDIA WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE.**

The average Civil Service Pension is £10,200!

It is £13,513 for men, and £7,502 for women.

We got these figures from an announcement at the Annual General Meeting in October.

### **Annual General Meeting DECISIONS**

Pam Flynn and Colin Elderkin attended the AGM on behalf of Greater Manchester Group. A full record of all AGM decisions will be published in the Pensioner magazine in due course.

Worth special mention here is the decision to continue to campaign with other pensioner organisations for the Winter Fuel Allowance to be reinstated. The CSPA also resolved to work constructively with others in the sector to campaign against the general trend towards means testing benefits, and to oppose any indication that State Pensions might move in this direction. Also, the AGM delegates expressed their concern at the Chancellor’s recent announcement that the Government have scrapped the planned implementation of the introduction of a cap on care fees from October 2025. Instead, the Government have opted for a Royal Commission to review the provision of care. This is yet more “kicking of the can down the road.”

In response, the Executive Council was instructed to work with Later Life Ambitions and other partners in the Age Sector to campaign for the government to establish a multi-disciplinary task force to speedily assess the

national situation and propose a cohesive and broad-ranging set of measures to implement in the short term. We are looking for those in dire need of care and their carers to get access to the services and support most urgently required.

A Royal Commission might take one to two years to reach its conclusions. We can't continue to wait. Wes Streeting, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has told AGE CONCERN that he is working on a ten-year plan for social care, with announcements due to come. We won't hold our breath.

Harry Brett was re-elected as Regional Representative for the North-West, and Pam Flynn was elected to the Executive Council.

## **REGIONAL NEWS**

In September, Pam Flynn and Harry Brett travelled to Liverpool to support UNITE, the Union's lobby of the Labour Party conference on the Winter Fuel Payment issue. (photograph of Pam and Harry, above carrying the flag for the NWPA) Unite the Union are pursuing legal action against the government based on a failure to consult properly and the apparent lack of any proper impact assessment.

Through our membership of the North-West Pensioners Association, we will continue to campaign for improvements to social care, and an end to pensioner poverty.

Harry Brett recently held discussions with John Howells of Harvey Howell Solicitors. They have an advertisement in the Pensioner (page 28), and they are prepared to offer in the new year, a series of seminars where they will answer questions on Wills, Trusts, and Lasting Powers of Attorney with a free private consultation on offer if wanted. They are trialling this offer in the Northwest, so Harry will let you know when and where they will take place as soon as possible as this may be of interest to many of you. They currently represent the National Federation of Police Officers and Macmillan employees, as well as individuals.

The National Pensioners Convention are currently going through re-organisation talks with the possibility of changing its status to "Not for Profit Company Limited by Guarantee". It is the current EC of the NPC view that the current status is not flexible to allow the NPC to raise sufficient funds for the NPC to thrive and to continue to work in the interests of Pensioners. It is hoped that decisions will be made in the next few months, as the current financial situation is not sustainable.

### **200 CLUB WINNERS and how to join**

The last six months 200 club winners are as follows:

June - 1 <sup>st</sup> Prize – Peter Lowry	2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize – Mr S A Brown
July - 1 <sup>st</sup> Prize – Dorothy Pritchard	2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize – Bob Ryan
August 1 <sup>st</sup> Prize – MJJ Hanrahan	2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize – Angela Unsworth

September 1<sup>st</sup> Prize – Barbara Stott      2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – John Jenkinson  
October 1<sup>st</sup> Prize – Peter Lowry      2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – Colin Hartley  
November 1<sup>st</sup> Prize – Graham Blackburn 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – Dorothy Pritchard

The next cycle will commence in March 2025 and anyone who would like to participate can either send me a cheque for £12 to my address – 46 Severn Way, Holmes Chapel, CREWE CW4 8FT or direct to our account Bank Sort Code 16-12-11, Account No 10177528 to CSPA Manchester. We would also welcome donations which allows us to pay expenses to delegates, affiliate to the NWPA and to Reclaim social care and support for the NHS. All donations and membership amounts are gratefully received.

### **Pensions Inequality: A CORRECTION**

In our last newsletter we said that the gap between the “old” basic state pension (pre-2016) and the new state pension (post 2016) was £2.00 per week. This is incorrect. The actual gap is a whopping £51.70 per week.

### **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The following Group meetings will take place at the Methodist Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester, M1 1JQ, commencing at 11-00am and finishing at 1pm. All meetings are on a Wednesday:

January 15<sup>th</sup>

March 26<sup>th</sup> - AGM

June 18<sup>th</sup> – Motions for Conference, Choosing delegates for Conference.

Sep 17<sup>th</sup> – Mandating Conference delegates.

Oct 15<sup>th</sup> – Conference Report

Dec 17<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Lunch – Come and join us.

In addition, the Stockport members of the Greater Manchester Group hold a luncheon on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each quarter, March, June, September and December at the Old Rectory Stockport commencing at 12 noon. We would welcome new attendees, just email at [h\\_brett@sky.com](mailto:h_brett@sky.com) or contact me on 07999 874864

As always, if you wish to see copies of group circulars issued by the CSPA you can find them in the members’ area of the CSPA Website.

We wish you season’s greetings and a peaceful new year.

Pam Flynn  
Group Secretary [stiritup298@gmail.com](mailto:stiritup298@gmail.com)

Harry Brett  
Regional Representative