



PROTECTING WHAT YOU'VE EARNED SINCE 1952

# Midlands Region Newsletter

## SPRING 2025



Hello to all CSPA members in the Midlands not currently represented by an active Group. My name is **Kevin Billson** and I am the **Midlands Regional Representative** on the CSPA Executive Council. If you are interested in getting more involved in CSPA activities, meeting with other members in your local area or would simply like a face-to-face meeting with your Regional Representative for an update on everything that the CSPA is doing, this newsletter will hopefully advise you on how to make this happen.

### **Coventry & Warwickshire**

Your nearest active Group is **Birmingham & District** who meet at St. Michaels Church, Moor Street Birmingham, B4 7UG which is around 10 minutes' walk from New Street railway station and three minutes from Moor Street station. Their AGM is scheduled to take place on **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30am**, any CSPA members in the Coventry and Warwickshire area are more than welcome to attend that or future meetings. Details can be gained from **Acting Chair Eileen Turner** on 07778 744 320 or [eileenturner@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:eileenturner@blueyonder.co.uk) Alternatively, if you would like a face-to-face meeting within Warwickshire please contact me with the details at the end of this newsletter.

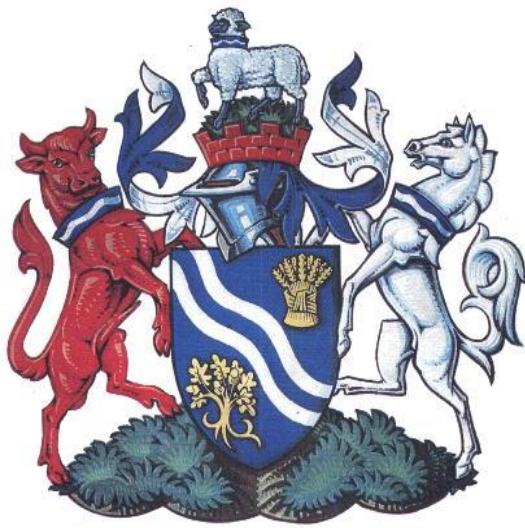
### **North Staffordshire**

I do not currently have contact with any North Staffordshire CSPA members. However, if you are a member living in that area and would like an informal meeting with myself and potentially other members, please feel free to contact me using the details at the end of this newsletter.

### **Nottingham & Derby**

Nottingham & Derby Group are not formally active but are starting to hold meetings again. **John Perry**, the former chair of this Group is keen to hear from anyone interested in getting the Group re-started and can be contacted on [jkp1951@gmail.com](mailto:jkp1951@gmail.com) The next meeting is set to take place on **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April at 11am in The Roebuck Inn, Nottingham NG1 6FH**. The venue is central and close to both bus and tram stops. I will be in attendance to provide an update on CSPA campaigns and other news.

## Oxfordshire



Oxfordshire Group are also not formally active, but a few members are continuing to meet. **Mike Warner** is keen to hear from anyone interested in getting the Group re-started and can be contacted on [mike79354@gmail.com](mailto:mike79354@gmail.com) The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April at noon in the Wig & Pen, George Street, Oxford OX1 2AU**. I will also be present at this meeting to provide a CSPA update.

## Group Circulars

### ***Group Circular 965 – Group and Branch Consultation on the Proposal to Introduce All-Member Ballots to Elect to Executive Council Posts in 2026***

Hopefully you will have seen an article and member survey within the Winter edition of The Pensioner encouraging you to share your views on proposals to tackle the growing 'democratic deficit' our organisation faces.

#### *What is being proposed?*

An online and postal ballot, open to all CSPA members, to elect our Chair, Vice Chair and to the five national officer posts.

#### *When would this take place?*

For the proposed ballot to be held in 2026, the necessary changes to CSPA's Rules & Constitution would need to be agreed by a two thirds majority at the AGM later this year.

If agreed, nominations will be called for in the Spring issue of the Pensioner 2026. The first all-member ballot will then be held in June/July 2026, so that results can be announced at the start of the AGM in October 2026.

### *How would the elections be held?*

Members will be able to vote online – with a link being sent to you by email or alternatively you can complete a paper ballot form, which would be included in the Pensioner and return it to the Freepost address.

### *Why are we proposing this?*

The Executive Council is acutely aware that our current structures and representation arrangements no longer provide all members with an opportunity to influence the future direction of the organisation. We would therefore like all CSPA members to have a say in mandating a national Executive Council of their choosing.

## **Group Circular 966**

### ***Future Circulation of the Annual Report***

At last year's AGM, two rule amendments were made which allow the EC to consider how the Annual Report (including the Statement of Accounts), AGM agenda and AGM report should be circulated in the future. These documents are currently sent to all members as supplements in The Pensioner, and a commitment was given to the AGM that, before any changes are made, Branches and Groups would be consulted.

Each supplement costs about £4000 in printing costs and the EC has considered whether this represents good value for money for members or whether there is a more cost-efficient way of making the information available. From this year, the EC proposes to make the following distribution changes:

The summer issue supplement and winter issue supplement should no longer be printed in the Pensioner

The Annual Report, Statement of Accounts and AGM report will be produced in hard copy and sent to Branches and Groups, they will be available to view in the members area of the website and they will be posted to any member that requests them.

The summer issue of the Pensioner will contain an introduction by the General Secretary to the Annual Report and a summary by the National Treasurer of the Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet.

The winter issue of the Pensioner will contain an overview report of the AGM but not a detailed report and minutes.



In 2025, the AGM agenda and election candidate pen pictures will continue to be published as a supplement in the autumn issue of the Pensioner. This will be further reviewed in 2026 in the context of the proposed changes in the electoral process.

These changes are estimated to save about £8000 in the cost of the Pensioner but will maintain the availability of these documents to all members.

Comments on these proposals should be sent to the National Treasurer, Mike Sparham, by **21<sup>st</sup> March 2025** at [M.Sparham@cspa.co.uk](mailto:M.Sparham@cspa.co.uk) or by post to: CSPA Head Office, 160 Falcon Road, London, SW11 2LN.

### **CSPA Audio ‘Podcasts’ for members**

A series of CSPA audio ‘podcasts’ have recently been launched on topics ranging from Civil Service pensions to the difference between basic (or ‘old’) and new State Pensions to how to arrange a Power of Attorney. Conversations with membership service providers such as CSIS and partner organisations are also in the pipeline.

The podcasts are available via the CSPA website ([www.cspa.co.uk](http://www.cspa.co.uk)) But if you know of members who are not online a transcript can be sent via a call to CSPA Head Office.

### **Audio version of the Pensioner**

Arrangements are being finalised with a company to offer an audio version of the Pensioner. Please contact CSPA Head Office if you know of a member who would like this service.

### **HQ Team Changes**

At the end of December, we bid farewell to Doreen Parkinson as our minutes secretary and wish her well in retirement. In her place we welcome Rose Cooney to assist us in recording EC meetings and the AGM. Rose will also be helping to cover the office when other colleagues are on leave.

That’s all for now in my first Midlands Newsletter for those members not currently represented by an active Group.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or would like to arrange or attend a meeting in your area.

**Kevin Billson**, CSPA Midlands Regional Representative

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