



Leicestershire & Rutland Group Newsletter No. 44

Welcome to the **Autumn** edition Newsletter which brings you up to date with what's been happening in the Group and at HQ.

Group Meeting

Regrettably we have had to change the date of the next meeting from 29 September to **Wednesday 29 October** due to venue availability issues. As usual the meeting will convene from 1.30pm for a 2pm start at the **Royal British Legion Club, 4A Wigston Road, Oadby, Leicester LE2 5QA**. The club has its own (free) car park and there is a regular bus service from the city. Tea and coffee will be available.



We will be welcoming back guest Speaker **Dave Andrews** (formerly of BBC Radio Leicester) who this time will be talking about **Richard III: The Man, The Mystery & the Carpark**. This illustrated talk combines the story of Richard III's life, how William Shakespeare portrayed him and his place in 15th century history with the amazing story of the search for his bones which were eventually discovered under a Leicester car park.

Group Meeting 2nd July 2025

The last Group meeting was in July and opened by Chair Rob Jameson. It was reported that meeting of the Group Committee had taken place on 20th May

and nominations for election of EC members at the national AGM had been agreed and submitted.

Liz Ellis, Group Treasurer reported a balance of £881.27 with the addition of £25 in donations to the Group received on the day. Outgoings included £25.90 in travel expenses for the attendance of Philip Coomes to the recent Midlands Regional meeting. The cost of the venue for today's meeting also remained to be deducted from the balance.

Kevin Billson, Group Secretary, reported on the three Group Circulars that had been received since the last meeting and the most recent Group newsletter no. 43. He also reported on the current Group membership total of 293 (of which 278 are active members).

Guest speaker on the day was **Les Priestley, CSPA Executive Council Chair**. Rob Jameson introduced Les and spoke about how they had known each other since 1996 due to Trade Union membership.

Les then gave some detail about his own background having been an inspector of taxes for thirty years while serving on the national executive of three Trade Unions. Les took partial retirement in 2010 and full retirement in 2013, having spent his entire working career in HMRC. Les has been a member of the CSPA since 2012 and stood for election as Chair of the EC in 2024.

Les then addressed several key issues within the current CSPA briefing;

CSPA Campaigning; The AGM directs CSPA business, motions passed are placed into a workplan which is published on the CSPA website. Les encouraged all members to visit the website which is 'full of information'.

LLA Manifesto: Three organisations including the CSPA came together to share resources and campaign on issues of mutual interest. Les listed all LLA's current campaigns.

Commissioner For Older People: NI Branch have enjoyed good support from their commissioner who has been prepared to challenge the Stormont government on their behalf i.e. they managed to retain their £100 Winter Fuel Payment. This shows the benefit of having a Commissioner for Older People.

Frozen Tax Threshold and what it means for pensioners financially

Winter Fuel Payment

Spending Review Statement and the main items of note for CSPA members

Cost of Living: Increase in Council Tax and the 'fiscal pickle' the current Government seems to be in.

CS Pension: Widows and Widowers pension and success in getting pension overpayments 'written off'

Pension administration: CAPITA and MyCSP problems

Campaigns: digital exclusion, social care and its broken system and Baroness Carey review, Carers UK and CSPA work with them.

Organisational issues: Membership numbers down to below 34,000, what is available to attract new members, CSIS travel insurance, Regional Employers Forums and the membership benefit package.

Rob Jameson then discussed the CSPA 2025 National AGM. It was agreed Rob would be the Group delegate to the national AGM and Ahmad Khwaja would be our Sponsored Representative.

Request For Voluntary Contributions

Liz Ellis, on behalf of the Group, would like to thank all local members who have made voluntary contributions of £5 or more to pay for our meeting venue, refreshments and the costs of our guest speakers. We have no other source of income and so to keep the Group going we would ask members to send a cheque payable to 'CSPA Leicestershire & Rutland District' to Group Treasurer Liz Ellis at 7, The Hall, Queniborough Hall Drive, Queniborough, Leicester LE7 3DZ or alternatively those that would like to pay their local subscription by bank transfer, they are very welcome to do so, using the following details - Sort code 01 06 34: Account Number 50681567: Account Name: Civil Service Pensioners Association. Please email Liz at lizellis450@icloud.com confirming that the payment has been made.

Group Circulars

The latest Group Circular No 974 has just been issued and is available for you to read on the CSPA website www.cspa.co.uk and is in the members area.

It covers a variety of subjects including the State Pensions Triple Lock. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has published a report saying that the UK's finances are on an "unsustainable" track and the country "cannot

afford” the spending promises made by the Government. The OBR conclude that spending commitments made on healthcare and pensions would be likely to push the national debt up from 94% of GDP to 270% by the early 2070s, in view of the ageing population. Adherence to the Triple-lock is expected to cost £15.5bn by 2030, which is three times the predicted level when it started. *More information can be found in copies of an article from the I News, dated 9 July 2025, and BBC News article, dated 8 July 2025.*

GC 974 also covers the Pensions Commission. Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Liz Kendall, has revived the Pensions Commission stating that, despite the Triple Lock and auto-enrolment, serious challenges remain as nearly half of working people aren’t saving for their retirement. Women, low earners, the self-employed and young people are at most risk of lagging behind, as more people face complex retirement decisions without the necessary support. GC 974 also covers predictions of further changes to Inheritance tax. The Guardian newspaper has reported, on 12 August 2025, that the Treasury is looking to raise more money from inheritance tax to ease “growing pressure” on the national finances ahead of the Autumn budget. One of the areas under review is the gifting of money and assets. If you would like to receive e-copies of the above and other Group Circulars, please contact the Group Secretary.

Leicestershire & Rutland Group Contacts

Rob Jameson – Chair jamesonrobert1947@gmail.com 0116 259 2680

Liz Ellis – Treasurer lizellis450@icloud.com 0116 269 2399

Simon Connelly – Vice Chair simon1connolly@yahoo.co.uk 0116 271 8641

Kevin Billson – Secretary kevinbillson@ntlworld.com 07827 320 413