

GROUP CIRCULAR 978

To: Branches, Groups and Executive Council

October 2025

Dear Colleague

1) Certificates of Merit Awards – 2025

2) CSPA HQ Team Update

1) Certificates of Merit Awards – 2025

After the reminder in circular **GC 972/25**, perhaps unsurprisingly, we had quite a number of nominations come in and we were pleased to be able to present six members with these awards at the 2025 AGM, with others to be presented at Group and Branch meetings. The Chair has since asked me to share the nominees' considerable achievements and inspirational accolades, as written up by those nominating them, and they follow here.

John Abington (Bedford & District Group)

John was elected as Chair in March 2011 when at that time Bedford and District Group had a membership of 561. He also actively participated in the meetings of the NPC and Bedford Borough Council Older People's Partnership Board. John lobbied all the Members of Parliament who represented the Group's representative area and encouraged members to interact with their own designated Parliamentary members.

In the absence of any volunteers, John also took on the responsibility of Membership Secretary following the death of Alf Evans who had held the post for 34 years and he 'cracked' mail merge as a method of distributing notifications to all our members that had email addresses, thus saving money and time and effort posting out. He also held the Treasurer's role for a time.

Following attendance at the Annual General Meeting he urged our members to submit motions, and Bedford has subsequently successfully lodged motions at most AGMs, one of these being to "oppose the trend to introduce a cashless society". London Transport and the Dartford Tunnel being further examples.

John was always aware that the loyal members who attended the quarterly meeting were encouraged by the "free lunch", but John always took the opportunity to bring all topical issues to the fore.

The EC had established a Future Options Working Party in partnership with NFOP (National Federation of Occupational Pensioners) and NARPO (National Association of Retired Police Officers), later to be known as Later Life Ambitions. John was closely associated with this campaign - giving consideration to the way ahead for the CSPA. RPI and CPI was still being considered at this time.

On CSPA's behalf, John was also involved with the local councils to do with the abolition of consultative boards.

John has engaged with all our parliamentary representatives during all these years. The topics at issue have remained curiously the same, namely Triple Lock, Crisis in Care (the Dilnot Report) Winter Fuel Payments, TV licences etc. In 2016 Baroness Roz Altman was trying to abolish the Triple Lock and still is today.

John has carried these roles for in excess of a dozen years. I doubt Bedford and District Group would still be in existence if not for John. He has announced he will not stand again next year at our AGM in March but will continue to serve as a committee member. He will be missed.

Alastair Hunter (Northern Ireland Branch)

I am writing to nominate, after agreement with the Northern Ireland Branch, our current Branch President, Alastair Hunter, to be awarded a CSPA Certificate of Merit.

Alastair has been a fantastic worker for the Branch. He held the positions of Branch Treasurer & Branch Membership Secretary for nearly 20 years. As an autonomous Branch of CSPA, Alastair had the extremely time-consuming task of issuing Membership Renewal Letters each year to every member who didn't pay directly from their pensions, etc. He then had to transfer each cheque / postal order to our Bank. This at a time when our Membership was nearly 4,500. He did this work faithfully and meticulously every year. For a significant period, this was before modern technology.

Since relinquishing these posts three years ago, Alastair was our Branch Chair for two years, and one year as our Branch President. He has shown through his dedication and service his deep commitment to the values and principles of CSPA.

Colin Fender (Bristol, Bath & West Group)

Colin Fender joined CSPA 22 years ago in 2003, and became active in the Bristol Group in 2004, joining the Group committee. In 2005 Colin became the Group Membership Secretary, and in 2013 took on the combined role of Group Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

Colin has been an active participant in the South-West Regional meetings and has been a delegate to the CSPA AGM since 2006.

In 2015 Colin was elected to the Executive Council as South-West Regional Representative and played an active role on the EC until he stood down in 2020 when there was no AGM due to the pandemic, but he continued to be active in the Bristol Group.

Michael Peacock (Twickenham & District Group)

Michael Peacock has been an active member of the Twickenham & District Group since 1997 after retiring from the Home Office as a Chief Immigration Officer. He became Group Chair in 1999, whilst also being the local vice-chair of the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship and has been active in encouraging mutual support and liaison between CSPA and the CSRF members locally.

Michael has regularly attended the national AGM as a delegate since 1999. Michael was also a volunteer speaker for CSPA at Departmental pre-retirement courses for many years.

Liz Ellis (Leicestershire & Rutland Group)

Liz was elected as a Group Officer at the Leicestershire & Rutland Group inaugural meeting in 2010. She has served as Group Treasurer for 15 years. Her work has therefore been crucial in maintaining the effective functioning of the Group.

Margaret Bagur (Leicestershire & Rutland Group)

Margaret was elected as a Group Officer at the Leicestershire & Rutland Group inaugural meeting in 2010. She served as Group Secretary for 5 years before standing down but has remained a Committee Member until the present day. She has therefore played a key role in getting the Group established on a sound footing and still regularly attends meetings to provide ongoing support.

Simon Connolly (Leicestershire & Rutland Group)

Simon was elected as a Group Officer at the Leicestershire & Rutland Group inaugural meeting in 2010. He has served as Group Vice Chair for 15 years.

His work has therefore been crucial in maintaining the effective functioning of the Group, not least because he provides our current meeting venue. Along with the Group Chair, he represented the Group at the National AGM in 2024.

Rob Jameson (Leicestershire & Rutland Group)

Rob was elected as a Group Officer at the Leicestershire & Rutland Group inaugural meeting in 2010. He has served as Group Chair for 15 years. His work has therefore been vital to the Group's creation and in maintaining its effective functioning. He has represented the Group at the National AGM on numerous occasions and is well known for positive reasons by a number of members of the national EC.

Stanley Kordys (Clacton & District Group)

On behalf of this Group, I am writing to nominate our Chair, Stanley Kordys, for the award of a "Certificate of Merit, for his unstinting and dedicated stewardship of this Group as Chair for over 20 years. Stan joined the Civil Service in 1970 until he retired in 2000. He has combined Trade Union membership of 55 years, including his 25 years as a retired member. He has consistently steered this Group in the face of an ageing and declining membership count.

I and our current members have no hesitation in nominating "Stan" for this Award.

Christine McGiveron (Scotland Branch)

Christine took over as Glasgow Group Secretary in 2011, where she continued until John's health deteriorated, and she had to step down from that role in 2021. Christine remained an active member of the group until its closure in 2023. Christine has also served on the Executive Council representing all CSPA members but especially the Scottish membership. Christine is still an active member of the EC to this day. In conjunction with the other Branch officers, Christine is keeping the CSPA alive in Scotland, and I feel that this endeavour should be rewarded with a Certificate of Merit.

Helen Connelly (West Mercia Group)

Helen attended her first Hereford and Worcester Group quarterly meeting in March 2011. She has rarely missed a quarterly meeting in the intervening 14 or so years. Helen was elected Group Treasurer in 2012 and, apart from one year when she stood down to become the Group Accounts Examiner, she has served as Group Treasurer ever since. Helen has carefully and conscientiously maintained the Group accounts, which have been duly

adopted by successive Group AGMs, and has without fail submitted the annual statements of account promptly to the National Treasurer.

Valerie Farmer (West Mercia Group)

Valerie attended her first Hereford and Worcester Group quarterly meeting in June 2006. She has rarely missed a quarterly meeting in the intervening 19 years. Valerie was elected Group Chair in 2012 and has held that post continuously for over 13 years. She has chaired the Group meetings with kindness and courtesy, guided and supported her fellow Group Officers, and represented the Group as necessary at regional meetings and National AGMs.

David Humphreys (West Mercia Group)

David first attended a Hereford and Worcester Group quarterly meeting in March 2013. He became the Group Secretary in July 2014 and has been re-elected every year since. His duties encompass the production of all the Group's papers, including the quarterly Group Newsletter, and latterly the responsibility for membership matters. David also served as the West Midlands (later Midlands) Regional Representative on the CSPA Executive Council from October 2016 to October 2022. He pioneered the merger of Hereford and Worcester Group with the closed Shropshire Group to become the West Mercia Group in February 2022.

Victor Reed (West Mercia Group)

Victor attended his first Hereford and Worcester Group meeting in May 2000 and has rarely missed a quarterly meeting in the last 25 years. He has held Group office for more than 10 of those years variously and conscientiously as Group Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. Victor has also represented the Group as a delegate to the National AGM and at regional meetings on several occasions.

2) CSPA HQ Team Responsibilities

Sally Tsoukaris, General Secretary (Full-time)

sally.tsoukaris@cspa.co.uk

David Luxton, Deputy General Secretary (Full-time)

david.luxton@cspa.co.uk

Mike Sparham, National Treasurer (Part-time – Mon to Thurs mornings)

M.Sparham@cspa.co.uk

Christine Haswell, Pensions & Personal Case Manager (Part-time – Mon to Wed) christine.haswell@cspa.co.uk

Christine Buckley, Editor (Part-time – Tues/Wed)
christine.buckley@cspa.co.uk

Verity Morrish, Digital Campaigns Manager (Part-time – Mon/Tues/Wed)
Verity manages the website and all electronic communications (emails, e-newsletters, etc) and maintains CSPA's social media pages. Members can submit updates and photographs of Group/Branch/Regional events to her for publication on our digital channels. Verity oversees the production of CSPA recruitment flyers, leaflets and other materials, and can tailor posters to suit Group/Branch/Region's requirements. verity.morrish@cspa.co.uk

Robyn Hampson, CRM Manager (Part-time – Tues/Wed/Fri)
Robyn manages member data, monitoring the accuracy and functionality of the CRM system, and works with the database software developers to troubleshoot and improve functionality. She assists with reconciling accounts, the updating of member records and communications with members, and also compiles mailing lists for magazine and newsletters. robyn.hampson@cspa.co.uk

Marion McAuliffe, Finance & AGM Manager (Part-time – Wed/Thurs)
Marion deals with the banking of annual membership subscription payments by Direct Debit and cheque, liaising with the bank to keep our member records updated in respect of Direct Debit payments. Marion is the events manager for the AGM and oversees the administrative work in the background to make this annual event run smoothly. Marion plans to retire at the end of the year and her duties are being passed on to Nadeene. marion.mcauliffe@cspa.co.uk

Nadeene Morris, Office Manager (Full-time)
Nadeene maintains our office equipment and office supplies. She assists the GS with the management of office cover and annual leave and the DGS in maintaining office policies and procedures. Nadeene is responsible for the distribution of Group Newsletters in the post (via Impress).

We need to receive newsletter copy from Groups at least 10 working days before they will need to be sent out. Please address it to Nadeene in the first instance by emailing it to nadeene.morris@cspa.co.uk (copying in enquiries@cspa.co.uk)

Katrina Hicks, Membership Co-ordinator (Full-time)
Katrina is the first point of contact for any issue pertinent to members or membership records. She co-ordinates the issue of most HQ communications to the EC, Groups and Branches, and assists with meeting room bookings and catering arrangements. Any matters arising that cannot be resolved in the first instance are redirected so they can be dealt with by other team members. katrina.hicks@cspa.co.uk

Rose Cooney, Minutes Secretary (Part-time – 55 days PA)

Rose attends and takes notes at all of the EC meetings and Sub-Committee meetings, as well as the Annual General Meeting. Rose also assists with office cover from time to time. rose.cooney@cspa.co.uk

If you have any questions or require any further information about the matters covered by this Group Circular, please don't hesitate to contact me, either by email or by telephone on **020 8688 8418 (Office)**.

Yours sincerely

Sally T.

Sally Tsoukaris
General Secretary

Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance

Tel: 020 8688 8418

Email: katrina.hicks@cspa.co.uk