

CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONERS' ALLIANCE

Greater Manchester Group

January 2026

Welcome to the New Year newsletter. This issue focuses on some planned changes to the democratic process within the CSPA, plus the implications of some policy announcements from government, including the Autumn Budget. There is also notice of group meetings which you may wish to attend. Our regional representative, Harry Brett, covers news of interest including our local 200 Club winners.

PENSIONS INCREASES ANNOUNCED IN THE AUTUMN BUDGET 2025

Both the basic and new State Pensions will increase by 4.8% in April 2026. Pensions Minister Torsten Bell has said that over 12 million pensioners will benefit by up to £575. Pension Credit which protects the most vulnerable is also set to increase by 4.8%.

However, the Triple Lock – whilst guaranteed for the duration of this Parliament – remains vulnerable. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) believes that spending commitments by the government (particularly on healthcare and pensions) are unsustainable.

The CSPA wishes to see the Triple Lock maintained. We are tracking press coverage of these issues. If you would like to see copies, please let us know. We are also campaigning for a Minimum Income Level required to sustain a basic but healthy and decent standard of living in later life.

Civil Service pensions will rise by 3.8% from 6 April 2026.

Civil Service trade unions are calling for action on the civil service “gender pension gap”.

TAX THRESHOLDS FROZEN

The Autumn budget confirmed that tax thresholds will continue to be frozen. As pensions increase, many more pensioners will see themselves subject to payment of income tax. This will benefit the Treasury but continue the pressure on pensioner cost of living.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING DECISIONS

John Jenkinson attended last October's AGM on behalf of Greater Manchester Group. A full record of all AGM decisions has been published in-house and is available on the CSPA Website. Alternatively, you can request a paper copy from us or from the National Office.

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

CHANGES TO BALLOT ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTION TO EC POSTS IN 2026

The AGM agreed a change to how EC members are elected. Starting with the 2026 AGM in October, there is to be a two-year trial of individual balloting of members, replacing the Group and Branch "block vote". Individual CSPA members will be able to nominate EC candidates and cast their votes online or by post. Information on the proposed changes, including the Ballot Timetable, will be given in the March and June issues of the Pensioner.

CONSULTING ON CSPA STATUS

There will be a round robin regional meeting to be held in Manchester at the Methodist Hall Oldham Street which will explain to members a possible legal change to the CSPA's organisational status. This is covered to some extent in the December issue of the Pensioner (page 11) but will be covered in more detail at this meeting. Representatives have been invited from all Groups in the Northwest, Northeast and Wales. The meeting will take place on Thursday 23 April between 11-00am and 3pm. The meeting which will also be taking place in other parts of the UK will be attended by the new Deputy General Secretary, Bernard Seymour from Affinity Resolutions and Mike Sparham, the National Treasurer.

If any Group member would like to attend, please advise me at h_brett@sky.com or by phone 07999 874864. This will eventually lead to an individual member vote on whether we should change our status or remain as a member led, not for profit association.

REGIONAL NEWS

The Northwest has managed to retain 4 active Groups – Chester, Greater Manchester, Liverpool and District and the Wirral. We have 5 non active Groups – Blackpool and Fylde, Cumbria, East Lancs, Morecambe Bay and Preston and Chorley. I have attempted over the last 2 years to try and re-start these Groups by visiting the area and inviting members to come and meet me, but unfortunately there is little desire to re-start the Groups. This was what led me to push for individual member voting on EC elections which allows individual members to have some involvement. I also send out a monthly email to over 300 members of the non-active Groups which also includes the latest Group Circulars originating from HQ. If anyone from the Greater Manchester Group would like to receive this information also, then please let me have your email and I will add you to the list.

On this note, HQ are particularly interested in encouraging members to provide their emails so that correspondence and especially this Group Newsletter could be sent to them by email as opposed to post, thus saving a great deal of **YOUR MONEY. The Pensioner will continue to be sent by post as it is a much larger document.**

200 CLUB WINNERS and how to join

The previous quarterly winners were:

October – 1st Prize – Harry Brett 2nd Prize – John Cooper

November - 1st Prize – Doreen Berresford 2nd Prize – B Stott

We have also come to that time of the year when a new monthly cycle will begin in March 2026. Anyone who would like to join the 200 club please send £12 for the year either by cheque to me Harry Brett at 46 Severn Way, Holmes Chapel, CREWE, CW4 8FT or direct to the Bank Sort Code 16-12-11, account 10177528 – Manchester & District Group CSPA.

We would also be grateful for any donations to help us run the Group and to meet any costs we may need to pay during the next 12 months.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who support the Group financially. We know that many members have other interests which do not allow them to attend Group meetings. The Greater Manchester Group is financially sound, but the committee very much appreciate the support of the members who support us this way.

DATES OF GROUP FUTURE MEETINGS

The Group AGM will be held on Wednesday 18th March
At this meeting we will elect branch officers and delegates to external organisations. Anyone who is interested in standing for office or joining the committee must attend this meeting and it would be helpful if they informed the Secretary of their intentions.
Other meetings will be held as follows:

Wednesday 17th June (Motions to AGM plus EC nominations)
Wednesday 30th September (Consideration of AGM Motions/ delegates to AGM)
Wednesday 21st October (AGM report-back)
Wednesday 16th December (Christmas lunch – all invited)

All meetings are held in the Methodist Central Hall Oldham Street Manchester, commencing at 11am and finishing by 1pm.
Oldham Street is close to Piccadilly Gardens tram stop.

We have a small number of committed members who run the Group, but would very much welcome new members, so please if you can spare the time do come along and meet us.

In addition to the Group meetings which we have note above, we have a fringe group of what was previously the Stockport Group who meet every quarter at the Old Rectory Churchgate Stockport at 12 noon. The next lunch meetings will be:

Thursday 5th March
Thursday 4th June
Thursday 3rd September
Thursday 10th December.

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.

Pam Flynn
Group Secretary stiritup298@gmail.com
Executive Council Member

Harry Brett
Regional Representative, Executive Council
07999 874864/ h_brett@sky.com