

GENERAL SECRETARY - CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONERS ALLIANCE

Job Description

Purpose of the Role

CSPA is an independent, non-political membership organisation for retired Civil Servants, formed to protect the value of the Civil Service Pension and to campaign on issues of importance to its members and older people in society more generally, such as the State Pension, Pensioner Taxation, Health and Social Care, Digital Exclusion and the provision of Accessible Housing and Public Transport.

CSPA is recognised by the Cabinet Office as representing the interests of retired Civil Service Pensioners and by the administrators of Civil Service pensions. CSPA is also recognised by the Department of Finance (Northern Ireland) in representing members who are part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pensions Scheme.

CSPA represents individual members experiencing issues with their pensions, escalating cases for resolution where required, and also provides a range of other, bespoke member services and benefits.

CSPA works in partnership with outside organisations including Age UK, the National Pensioners Convention (NPC), Carers UK, and Independent Age, and is affiliated to the Care & Support Alliance (CSA) and Carer Poverty Coalition (CPC).

The post holder is office-based and leads a small team at the CSPA Head Office in Clapham Junction. The General Secretary reports directly to the Chair of the Executive Council (EC), who represents the EC as the Employer.

A knowledge of both Civil Service and State Pension issues would be advantageous, as well as experience of working in campaigning and membership organisations.

The General Secretary is required to attend all the meetings of, and report to, the Executive Council and to their Sub-Committees, taking a lead role in supporting the work of the Executive Council, Finance & General Purposes Committee and Campaign Sub-Committee as secretariat.

The General Secretary (GS) represents CSPA by attending regular meetings with the Cabinet Office scheme managers and the pension administrators, with the support of the Deputy General Secretary and Pensions Manager.

The GS may also be required to attend events, such as the Cabinet Office's Regional Employer Forums and Trade Union conferences, to run CSPA stalls and, on occasion, to speak or participate in panel discussions.

Duties and Responsibilities

The duties of the GS are to:

- Protect the value of the Civil Service Pension, and to ensure that the interests of CSPA members are represented to Government and Policy makers.
- Shape the culture of CSPA to ensure that the organisation remains sustainable and relevant by attracting to new members and meeting the needs of its longer-term supporters.
- Lead work on campaigns based on policy agreed by members at the Annual General Meeting.
- Advise the elected Executive Council (EC), which is responsible for managing the business of CSPA, regularly reporting back on progress at its quarterly meetings, and between them providing secretariat support to various EC sub-committees, compiling agendas and preparing briefings and policy papers, as required for decision-making.
- Lead CSPA Campaigns on various policy issues, such as the State Pension Triple Lock, Pensioner Benefits and Taxation, Health and Social Care, Digital Exclusion and the Cost-of-Living, working with the Deputy General Secretary and reporting to the Executive Council and its Sub-Committees.
- Host and oversee the administration of the CSPA Annual General Meeting (AGM), where they support the Chairs, act as Secretary to the Standing Orders Committee and present the Annual Report for adoption, as well as speaking to some AGM motions on the Executive Council's behalf.

- Lead CSPA in negotiations with Cabinet Office Pension Officials, ensuring that consultation responses are submitted, in liaison with the Pensions Manager, where required.
- Maintain liaison with the Civil Service Pension Board to ensure members' experiences in receiving their Civil Service Pension are relayed and any issues arising are escalated, as and when required.
- Continue work to raise CSPA's profile and promote member recruitment.
- Act as a representative of CSPA in giving evidence to Select Committees and at meetings with MPs and Policy Officials to promote CSPA campaigns.
- Maintain operational oversight over all aspects of the CSPA Head Office, including taking responsibility for staffing and the management of a team of up to 12 employees, reporting to the Executive Council as necessary.
- Communicate CSPA policy progress at Group and Branch meetings and share developments in member communications, including the GS column in the Pensioner magazine, website and social media updates and regular e-newsletters.
- Collaborate with Later Life Ambitions Partners, the National Federation of Occupational Pensioners (NFOP) and National Association of Retired Police Officers (NARPO) to campaign on shared policy issues of concern to members.
- Keep abreast of Government announcements and changes likely to impact CSPA members, including but not limited to, Chancellors' Statements, relevant fiscal reviews, likely pension increases (primarily Civil Service and State Pensions), changes to the State Pension Age, eligibility for State Pensioner Benefits, and Tax changes likely to affect pensioners, as well as ongoing issues such as WASPI, the cost of energy, water and other utilities, pensioner poverty and pension adequacy.
- Issues regular Circulars to Groups and Branches, to inform and update them on CSPA's campaigns, issues arising that impact members and on support available from CSPA HQ to assist them.
- Carry out any other duties as required by the Executive Council.

The GS supports the work of the Pensions Manager and Deputy General Secretary in dealing with ad hoc queries from members and will also need to be aware of, and be able to signpost members to, suitable sources of further advice and assistance such as the Charity for Civil Servants, Step Change Debt Charity or the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Stakeholder Relationships

- Lead on contractual relationships with Sub-Contractors and Consultants, including Legal and HR Advisors.
- Lead on working relationships with campaign partners, including Later Life Ambitions, the relevant Trade Unions and other Age Sector organisations, such as Age UK, Carers UK and Independent Age.
- Lead on working relationships with the Civil Service Trusted Partners (Charity for Civil Servants, Civil Service Retirement Fellowship, Civil Service Sports Club and Civil Service Insurance Society).

Competencies required for the role:

The following competencies are required to successfully fulfil the requirements of the role:

Leadership: able to motivate both staff and volunteers to achieve a new and better service for our members. Lead work with CSPA colleagues on policy issues, collaboratively seeking to improve the administration of the Civil Service Pensions, working with the Cabinet Office and pension administrators.

Teamwork: Have a team-orientated approach: building strong working relationships and a positive work environment within CSPA and with other partnership organisations

Strategic Thinking: formulate plans, using resources available, to raise CSPA's profile and develop its work.

Communication: communicate clearly via a range of methods including using social media platforms to raise the profile of CSPA and its work.

Judgement: take a balanced view when taking forward the concerns of the membership while respecting the non- political nature of the CSPA

Flexibility: adapt as required to meet changing priorities of the organisation and respond swiftly to emerging government policy or media stories

Innovation: take forward new ideas and ways of working together across the CSPA

Customer Focus: ensure that our members and volunteers are at the centre of CSPA's work and that they experience good value for their membership subscription.

Efficiency: Plan and manage time to meet required deadlines of self and colleagues, being cost conscious, and developing better ways of working.

Development: Support staff development and continuous improvement of the CSPA. Be willing to learn in any relevant areas, embracing the continuous improvement of CSPA and adapting to the changing needs of its members.

Communication: communicate clearly via a range of methods and media, including presenting, both in person and online, to groups of members and at external events, keeping members, prospective members, external partners and others informed of the work of CSPA through innovative communications, including the use of social media.

Initiative: Taking ownership of their own work, developing policy, ideas and campaigns responsively, as required.

Analytical – an ability to consider information provided by members and distil the important facts and arguments that are required to make a strong appeal.

Additional Skills and Notes

The right person will enjoy helping people and have an empathic approach to individuals requiring assistance. This should be balanced with an ability to establish the correct facts and to manage the expectations of others realistically.

On 1 December 2025, the administration of the Civil Service Pension Scheme was transferred from the former service providers, MyCSP, to Capita. The transition has not gone smoothly and has left many recent retirees and others about to retire facing long delays in attempting to access their pensions and related information. This has presented CSPA with challenges and opportunities in raising the profile of the issues and representing the interests of members impacted by the crisis.

In October 2025, at the CSPA AGM, a motion was carried instructing the Executive Council to consult members on CSPA's legal status and the



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possibility of becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee. The General Secretary, working with the National Treasurer, has led this consultation and would have a key role to play if the 2026 AGM were to decide to progress with incorporation.

The successful candidate will have a collaborative style of leadership.

The role requires occasional travel and overnight stays within the UK, including Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.