





# WASPI CAMPAIGN



## Women Against State Pension Injustice

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### Notes for the meeting of the APPG on Women's State Pension Inequality, 13 May 2024

#### Our Campaign

- The WASPI (Women Against State Pension Injustice) Campaign 2018 has 56 local groups stretching from Aberdeenshire to Cornwall, plus designated representatives in 325 constituencies (i.e. 50% of the total).
- This latter group (known as the WASPI Swarm) consists of over 500 women who are in regular contact (at least once a month) with their own MPs to ensure that they have up-to-date and accurate information about the progress of the campaign. This network is particularly important now that the PHSO's report has been laid before Parliament for implementation.
- We liaise closely with our fellow campaigners at Women Against State Pension Inequality and **the aims of the two WASPI campaigns are identical** – namely to secure **fair and fast compensation** for the injustice inflicted on women born in the 1950s by the Department for Work and Pensions through its maladministration.

#### Our Views on the PHSO report

- We welcomed the PHSO's final report. Despite some reservations, especially around the level of compensation suggested, we feel that picking over the detail at this stage is not helpful and only plays into the hands of those who would prefer to delay compensation for as long as possible.
- Our principal concerns at this point are the refusal of the DWP to accept the PHSO's findings, and the failure by the Government and Opposition – more than seven weeks after its publication – to engage with the PHSO report and commit to implementing its recommendations.
- The PHSO has made it clear – both in their report and at the Work and Pensions Committee on 7 May 2024 – that this is a unique situation. As Peter Aldous pointed out in the House of Commons on 25 March 2024, “A failure by Government to comply with [the Ombudsman's] recommendations would be almost completely unprecedented over the past 70 years, and would in effect drive a coach and horses through an integral part of our system of democratic checks and balances.”

#### What should a Compensation Scheme look like?

- A balance clearly needs to be struck between “fair” and “fast” compensation. Prolonged and detailed attempts to (a) design and (b) implement a fair scheme could result in unacceptable levels of administrative complexity coupled with further delay, as the PHSO report points out.

- The simplest compensation scheme would be something broadly along the lines proposed by Alan Brown MP in his State Pension Age (Compensation) Bill, which is admirably concise and to the point. This relies entirely on date of birth as the defining factor, as follows:

Dates of birth	Range of changes to State Pension Age	PHSO compensation scale
6 April 1950 to 5 April 1951	Between 1 day and 1 year	Levels 1 and 2
6 April 1951 to 5 October 1952	Between 1 year, 1 day and 2 years	Level 3
6 October 1952 to 5 April 1953	Between 2 years, 1 day and 3 years	Level 4
6 April 1953 to 5 December 1953	Between 3 years, 2 months, 1 day and 5 years	Level 5
6 December 1953 to 5 April 1960	Between 5 years, 2 months, 1 day and 6 years	Level 6

- In addition, we agree that a separate mechanism should be available to enable women who can provide evidence of direct financial loss to claim for additional compensation.
- Finally, our campaign has adopted the following principles for any compensation scheme. It should:
  1. be **simple** to understand and administer, without requiring affected individuals to make complex claims;
  2. not be subject to **income tax**;
  3. not be **means-tested**;
  4. not be taken into account in the calculation of **means-tested benefits**.

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