



# WASPI CAMPAIGN



## Women Against State Pension Injustice



www.waspicampaign2018.co.uk

waspigroupnetwork@gmail.com

### MEETING YOUR MP OVER THE SUMMER IS VITAL!

It is essential that all MPs understand the Ombudsman's recommendations for compensation for 1950s women and why it is urgent that the new Government sets up a compensation scheme.

**Please arrange to meet your MP over the summer to discuss this.**

Your discussion doesn't have to be complicated, in fact the simpler and more straightforward the better!

The points you need to make are set out on the next page. If you need any further information or have any queries, please email us at [waspigroupnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:waspigroupnetwork@gmail.com)

### HOW TO ARRANGE A MEETING WITH YOUR MP

1. You can find your MP's contact details by googling them. You should be able to find their website and/or any social media sites they use, such as Facebook (alternatively, use this link to find their parliamentary email address: <https://members.parliament.uk/members/commons>).
2. Ask for an appointment by ringing their local constituency office, emailing them or dropping them a note. MPs' office staff are usually very friendly and helpful, so don't be nervous about ringing. You can arrange to meet at their office or at a public place such as a community centre or coffee shop.
3. **Always make sure you include your full name and address in the constituency.**
4. Say you want to discuss the implementation of the Ombudsman's recommendations for compensation for 1950s women. Explain that on average each constituency contains 5,500 1950s born women and you are one of them.
5. You may need to chase up your email after a week or so if you don't get a reply.

### PLEASE TURN OVER FOR A PROMPT SHEET TO USE WHEN YOU MEET YOUR MP

Feel free to take someone with you for support.

We recommend that you don't get involved in a discussion about your personal situation, or the rights and wrongs of the case. The Ombudsman has concluded that there was maladministration by the Department for Work and Pensions – they got things wrong in a way that affected 1950s women. Compensation has been recommended and the issue now is to get a fair and fast compensation scheme in place as soon as possible.

## AT THE MEETING WITH YOUR MP

Please make these points. You may wish to start by to congratulating them on their election (or re-election).

1. **The Ombudsman has recommended that compensation should be paid to 1950s women.**  
Don't enter into a discussion about whether compensation is deserved or not ... it's been recommended by Parliament's own watchdog! This is a link to the Ombudsman's report, published on 21 March: [Women's State Pension age: our findings on injustice and associated issues \(ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/women-state-pension-age-our-findings-on-injustice-and-associated-issues)
2. **In 99% of cases, the Ombudsman's recommendations are accepted by the organisations they investigate.** Your MP will make use of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman for all kinds of constituency casework. Can they really afford to ignore them in this instance?
3. **The compensation is for the injustice caused by the DWP's maladministration** - in other words, its poor communication and the effects which this had on 1950s women. It's not compensation for the change to the State Pension age itself (which the High Court in 2019 ruled had been lawful), or for "lost" pensions.
4. **The cost of compensation is not a valid reason for failing to act.** The Ombudsman's Principles for Remedy say that "finite resources should not be used as an excuse for failing to provide a fair remedy."
5. **The matter is now urgent!** The Conservative Government failed to take any action; the Labour Government now say they are "considering" the report. While they consider it, a WASPI woman dies every 13 minutes. 4,000 will die during the summer recess alone.
1. **Ask your MP** to write to the Secretary of State (Liz Kendall MP) and the Under-Secretary of State (Emma Reynolds MP) asking for a compensation scheme to be set up as a matter of urgency. Also ask them to look for opportunities to raise the issue in Parliament.
2. **The compensation scheme should be ...**
  - simple to understand and administer, without requiring individuals to make complex claims,
  - not subject to income tax,
  - not means-tested and
  - not taken into account in the calculation of means-tested benefits.
3. **If your new MP is a member of the Lib Dems, SNP or Plaid Cymru**, please remind them that the implementation of a compensation scheme was in their election manifesto. **If your new MP is a member of the Green Party**, please remind them that compensation for 1950s women is one of their policies.

Thank you for doing this. It would be helpful if you could let us know what reply you receive. Please email [waspigroupnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:waspigroupnetwork@gmail.com)

## FURTHER INFORMATION YOU COULD ADD OR USE TO RESPOND TO POINTS YOUR MP MIGHT MAKE

1. The new Labour Government has responded to the report with statements in July from Emma Reynolds, the Under-Secretary of State for Pensions, saying:

*“As a newly formed Government we will need time to review and consider the Ombudsman’s report along with the evidence provided during the investigation. This Government respects the work of the Ombudsman. Now the election has concluded we need to consider the views that have been expressed on all sides. The issues outlined in the report are significant and complex, as such they require serious deliberation. Once this work has been undertaken, the Government will be in a position to outline its approach.”*  
(22nd July)

*“As a newly formed Government, we need time to review the Ombudsman’s report along with the evidence provided during the investigation. We will listen to all views, including those of 1950s-born women, as we take this work forward. The WASPI organisation has written to me and I intend to meet with their representatives in due course.”* (25th July)

2. Unfortunately, to weary campaigners this sounds like a euphemism for further delaying. Continual delays mean that more women will die with this issue unresolved (4,000 will die during the summer recess). Labour cannot accuse the previous government of dithering on the issue, and then proceed to dither in the same manner themselves. Just before the election, Keir Starmer said "The Ombudsman's report came out I don't know how many months ago now and the Government should have responded and they haven't done so ... it is shocking that the Government hasn't dealt with it."
3. The new government has said that they wish to restore trust in politicians. We trust that the new Government will do the right thing and follow the Ombudsman’s recommendations, as has happened in over 99% of cases where the Ombudsman has made recommendations for public bodies.
4. For women born in the 1950s, trust will not be restored until the recommendations that the Ombudsman has laid before Parliament are accepted and a compensation scheme is set up. It must be:
  - simple to understand and administer, without requiring individuals to make complex claims,
  - not subject to income tax,
  - not means-tested and
  - not taken into account in the calculation of means-tested benefits.