

ABOUT WASPI

WASPI stands for Women Against State Pension Inequality. We are a Campaign group representing many of the 3.8 million women born in the 1950s who have been negatively impacted by the mismanagement of increases in their State Pension age (SPa), which were implemented by the 1995, 2007 and 2011 Pension Acts.



WHAT WE ARE CALLING FOR

We are fighting to end the financial hardship that 1950s born women are facing as a result of the maladministration of these pensions changes by successive Governments. We work with MPs and Peers across all political parties to call for fair transitional State Pension arrangements for all WASPI women. Ultimately, this means a bridging pension and compensation for those affected to cover the period between age 60 and the new SPa. We recognise that there may be steps along the way to achieving this. We are open to discussion and negotiation to find a reasonable solution.

WHY DID THIS HAPPEN?

The State Pension Age changes

The first increase in women's SPa was introduced by the Pensions Act 1995. The Act legislated for women's SPa to rise to 65 slowly between April 2010 and April 2020. In 2011, the Government announced that the timetable would be accelerated, and women's State Pension would rise to 66 by October 2020.

The WASPI Campaign supports the principle of equalisation of the SPa but does not agree with the unfair way the changes were implemented.

A lack of communication

There is considerable evidence showing that the Government did not communicate these changes to WASPI women effectively. Worse, the Government was aware that communications were having little impact but took no action despite knowing that they were failing millions of women.

- FOI requests show that the Government waited until April 2009, fourteen years after the 1995 Pensions Act, before it began individually writing to the women affected.
- In March 2011 the Government stopped contacting women affected due to consideration of accelerating the equalisation of the SPa, and only began again in January 2012.
- A significant proportion of WASPI women only received a letter advising them of increases to their SPa when they were 59, within 1 year of their expected SPa of 60. Many others received only 2, 3, 4 or 5 years notice.
- Many WASPI women report never receiving any communication from the Government. Others say letters were sent to the wrong address despite notifying the DWP of address changes.
- The Government's own website showed the SPa for women as 60 right up until February 2016. Previous Pension Ministers have acknowledged this and recognised that the system was not fit for purpose.

THE IMPACT

The women affected were not given sufficient notice by the Government that their SPa would be increasing. They had no time to put alternative financial arrangements in place to see them through to the new state retirement age. For many, financing alternative arrangements was simply not an option, and women and their families are now suffering huge financial difficulties.

Some will lose up to £52,000. A report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies in August 2017 found that the rising SPa left women's household incomes on average £32 per week lower, and "lead to the absolute income poverty rate of women aged 60–62, who are now under the SPa, increasing by 6.4 percentage points".

OTHER GROUPS CAMPAIGNING ON THIS ISSUE

There are a number of other groups campaigning on the issue of the State Pension for women. We have an achievable ask which requires political will to put right a terrible injustice for a generation of women. We have members who subscribe to join the Campaign and vote for their representatives, and a Company Limited by Guarantee which ensures accountability and financial propriety. This ensures financial accountability and transparency.

We are a separate group to Women Against State Pension Injustice, WASPI Campaign 2018, and the Back to 60 Campaign. We are not calling for and will not offer our support for:

- A reversal of any Pension Act
- Full restitution of the State Pension
- The option of a bridging loan or reduced pensions for life
- Any solution which is only offered to a certain group rather than the whole WASPI cohort.

LEGAL ACTION

- Between January 2017 and November 2018, WASPI began to support thousands of women in making and pursuing complaints to the DWP, then the Independent Case Examiner's Office (ICE) and finally to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).
- This maladministration complaint against the DWP was based on the Government's failure to properly communicate changes to the SPa. This process was paused for some time whilst the PHSO awaited the result of a Judicial Review brought by another campaign group.
- The PHSO has now announced that it will resume consideration of WASPI's maladministration case. They will do so by looking at a sample of six individual complaints.
- We continue to consult with our lawyers about the process and will be watching the issue closely. We will support the PHSO in any way we can and will continue to offer help and advice for our members.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

There has never been a better time to act to support the WASPI campaign, and we look forward to progressing our campaign for justice with your support. There are many ways you can help, including:

- Pledge to support the findings of the PHSO
- Write to Rt Hon Dr Thérèse Coffey MP as the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions calling for her to seek fair transitional arrangements for WASPI Women
- Include information about WASPI in your newsletter, on your website and Facebook page
- Publicly support the WASPI Campaign on social media: [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)
- Meet with your local and national WASPI representatives to discuss this issue.

WASPI is happy to support you with any of the above actions. Please contact us for further information.

CONTACT US

If you would like any additional information, written briefings or other materials, please contact Florence Woodrow at Connect on 020 7592 9592 or at waspi@connectpa.co.uk.



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