



**THE NEWSLETTER OF  
THE SOCIETY OF  
PENSION CONSULTANTS**

## contents

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**PAGE 2** SPC Dinner, November 7<sup>th</sup> 2012, Dorchester Hotel, London

---

SPC Contacts

---

Roger Mattingly succeeds Kevin LeGrand as SPC President

---

**PAGE 3** Lindsay Davies re-elected SPC Honorary Treasurer

---

What's being read on the SPC website?

---

SPC launches its vision 2020 White Paper

SPC has launched its Vision 2020 White Paper, examining the implications of the shift of defined benefit pension fund investment from equities to less volatile investments.

---

DWP consultation on Occupational Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) (Amendment) Regulations 2012

---

DWP Consultation: Automatic Enrolment – Career Average Schemes as Qualifying Schemes

---

SPC response to DWP on Red Tape Challenge

---

**PAGE 4** SPC response to DWP: Revised Implementation Proposals for Workplace Pension Reform

---

Definition of Money Purchase Benefits

---

**PAGE 5** Pensions Regulator consultation: Determinations Panel procedure

---

We have responded to the Pensions Regulator on its consultation document on its Determinations Panel procedure.

---

SPC responds to FOS consultation: "Charging for Our Work – Modernising Our Case Fee Arrangements from 2013"

---

SPC comment on FSA quarterly consultation (CP12/05)

We have responded to FSA on its quarterly consultation (CP12/05), in so far as it concerned pension disclosures.

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SPC submission to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee

We made a submission to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee, for its recent inquiry into governance and best practice in workplace pension provision.

---

SPC responds to draft regulations on withholding under FATCA in the USA

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**PAGE 6** TPAS is seeking volunteer advisers



## SPC Dinner 2012

**November 7<sup>th</sup> 2012, Dorchester Hotel, London W1**

The SPC Dinner promises to provide excellent food and entertainment and, in keeping with one of SPC's key roles, represents a peerless networking opportunity to meet with fellow industry professionals.

**Key information is:**

➤ **Principal Speaker**

Principal guest and speaker will be Gregg McClymont, MP (The Shadow Pensions Minister)

➤ **Presentation of the "SPC Journalists of the Year Awards"**

These awards will recognise one journalist from each of the national press and pensions trade media, who has made an outstanding contribution to pensions journalism in 2012, as voted by SPC Members.

➤ **Sponsorship**

This year, we are again offering SPC Members the opportunity to associate themselves with the prestige and success of the Dinner, through sponsorship.

We would welcome your sponsorship of one or more of the following:

- The printed list of those attending, available to the 300+ diners on arrival
- The menu at each place at the Dinner *Sponsorship agreed*
- The SPC National Pensions Journalist of the Year Award
- The SPC Pensions Trade Journalist of the Year Award

The sponsorship amount for each is £1,500 (VAT is not chargeable). Please contact John Mortimer as soon as possible to seize these opportunities.

Tickets are available at £175.00 per head and feedback from previous years' Dinners indicates that this is a modest cost, which can be repaid many times over in terms of the useful networking opportunities, which exist to strengthen your business relationships. The price includes pre-dinner cocktails, a five-course meal, half a bottle of wine with dinner, and a liqueur with coffee.

As ever, we are keen to encourage "new blood" at the Dinner and ensure that it continues to offer the broadest possible range of networking opportunities for those attending. To that end, if your organisation has never previously been represented at the Dinner, the person making the booking will benefit from a discounted special price of £150.00, as will one additional guest.

The closing date for applications for tickets is October 10<sup>th</sup>.

For a booking form [CLICK HERE](#) .

## SPC Contacts

SPC has had a meeting with representatives of the Investment Management Association.

Subjects discussed included key issues arising in the defined contribution reform process and broader implications of a changing institutional market.

## Roger Mattingly succeeds Kevin LeGrand as SPC President

Roger Mattingly succeeded Kevin LeGrand as SPC President on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2012.


Roger Mattingly is a Director of JLT Benefit Solutions Limited and heads up its Client Relationship Management and its London Office.

At the recent SPC Annual General Meeting he paid warm tribute to the contribution which Kevin LeGrand had made to SPC's work during his two year term as President.


## Lindsay Davies re-elected **SPC** Honorary Treasurer

Council has elected Lindsay Davies, a Partner in Hymans Robertson, for a further term as SPC Honorary Treasurer.

## What's being read on the **SPC** website?

[CLICK HERE](#)  for the latest summary of hits on the SPC website, presented to the SPC PR Committee.


## **SPC** launches its Vision 2020 White Paper

SPC has launched its Vision 2020 White Paper, examining the implications of the shift of defined benefit pension fund investment from equities to less volatile investments. It is available [CLICK HERE](#) .

## DWP consultation on Occupational Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) (Amendment) Regulations 2012

DWP has published a consultation document on the draft Occupational Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.

For a copy of the consultation document, please [CLICK HERE](#) .

Our brief response is available [CLICK HERE](#) .

## DWP consultation: Automatic Enrolment – Career Average Schemes as Qualifying Schemes

DWP has published a consultation document on auto-enrolment and using career average schemes as qualifying schemes.

For a copy, please [CLICK HERE](#) .

At the time of preparing this issue of **SPC News**, we had the document under consideration.

## **SPC** response to DWP on Red Tape Challenge

We have responded to DWP on its request for suggestions of matters to be covered by its Red Tape challenge response.

In our response we stated that initiatives to revoke or simplify legislation, and to ease burdens on employers and business, are welcome and we were therefore pleased to suggest some broad areas, which could be addressed as part of DWP's contribution to meeting the government's Red Tape Challenge.

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## SPC response to DWP on Red Tape Challenge

It is nevertheless disappointing to note that the State pension, and in particular any associated contracting out legislation, is outside the scope of the challenge, given that simplification of certain areas of the contracting out legislation could potentially assist with the process of adjusting for the effects of unequal GMPs, on which the government has recently consulted.

Two other areas, which could usefully be addressed, would appear to be excluded by virtue of not being wholly owned by DWP. These are pension sharing on divorce, where some of the legislation falls under the Ministry of Justice, and inconsistencies between DWP and HMRC requirements.

Furthermore, it would be helpful to have greater consistency between pension illustrations given in various contexts, although this would also require action by bodies other than DWP, which owns only the Statutory Money Purchase Illustration requirements.

As always with exercises like the Red Tape Challenge, one needs to be careful that helpful changes in legislation are not accompanied by transitional safeguards, which leaves legislation at least as complicated as it was before the changes were made.

Against this background, we suggested that the following areas should be considered:-

- Disclosure: work has been in hand in this area for some time, although with as yet limited tangible progress

DWP has now indicated that a full review of the regulations will be carried out under the Red Tape Challenge and we support this.


There is scope to reduce the disclosure requirements, but harmonisation and consolidation of these requirements would represent progress, even if no regulations were actually removed.

- Transfers of members, including "bulk transfers" without consent as part of scheme reorganisations.
- The 1991 Preservation requirements.
- Employer related investment regulations: the rationale for these regulations is sound, but the regulations are complicated and unwitting non-compliance is a real risk. Consequently, the imposition of criminal penalties for non-compliance should, in particular, be reviewed.
- Indexation: reconsider the need for compulsory indexation of pensions in payment, where it still exists, in respect of future accrual.

Action here would facilitate the Pensions Minister's wish to encourage "defined ambition" schemes.

## SPC's response to DWP: Revised Implementation Proposals for Workplace Pension Reform


We responded to DWP on its consultation document on revised implementation proposals for workplace pension reform and on its consultation response on the auto-enrolment earnings trigger and the qualifying earnings band.

For a copy of the response, please [CLICK HERE](#) .

The consultation document is available [CLICK HERE](#) .

## Definition of Money Purchase Benefits

In the light of expected DWP consultation on regulations on the definition of money purchase benefits, in the light of the amended definition introduced in Part 4 of the Pensions Act 2011 (in reaction to the Houldsworth judgment), we have written to DWP on some of the detailed implications.

For a copy of our letter, please [CLICK HERE](#) .

## Pensions Regulator consultation: Determinations Panel procedure


We have responded to the Pensions Regulator on its consultation document on its Determinations Panel procedure.

The response is available [CLICK HERE](#) .

We reported the publication of the consultation document in [SPC News no. 4, 2012](#).

## SPC responds to FOS consultation: "Charging for Our Work – Modernising Our Case Fee Arrangements from 2013"

We have responded to FOS on its consultation document on its case fee arrangements from 2013.

For a copy of our response please [CLICK HERE](#) .


The consultation is available [CLICK HERE](#) .

We consider that, overall, the proposals will move FOS charges onto a fairer footing. Having said this, the new proposals do not seem to address the fact that those firms, which have no cases referred to FOS, collectively contribute 6% of FOS's total income.

## SPC comment on FSA quarterly consultation (CP12/05)

We have responded to FSA on its quarterly consultation (CP12/05), in so far as it concerned pension disclosures.

For a copy of our response please [CLICK HERE](#) .

For a copy of the consultation, please [CLICK HERE](#) .


## SPC submission to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee

We made a submission to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee, for its recent inquiry into governance and best practice in workplace pension provision.

For a copy, please [CLICK HERE](#) .

## SPC responds to draft regulations on withholding under FATCA in the USA

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For a copy of our response, please [CLICK HERE](#) .



# TPAS is seeking volunteer advisers

Here is a message from TPAS.

Pensions in crisis! Customers ripped-off! Pension pots halved! It seems that every week there is bad news story about pensions. The headlines are often misleading but the effect they have is a confused, disengaged and suspicious readership. Completely baffled, many end up contacting TPAS for help and guidance.

And no matter how well run a scheme is, from time to time someone will be unhappy and they will want something done to put things right. Most schemes and plans are able to calm the waters themselves but sometimes that is not possible and we are asked to help. Not all complaints are justifiable, but most people who contact us are in genuine need of help.

TPAS volunteer advisers use their wealth of experience to help members of the public with their pension questions and problems. Some, with the time, and who live within reaching distance of London, join us in our friendly office, to help answer questions on our helpline. The calls are a complete mixed bag of queries and issues, ranging from the very simple to the complex, and from the State scheme to a SIPP. It may sound daunting but we provide full training and support. And the reward of helping someone better understand their pension or their choices is immediate. Given that our helpline is open 9 to 5 Monday to Friday, volunteers supporting it tend to be retired, in part-time work, or between jobs but wanting to keep up to date and use their skills.

The bulk of our volunteer network help TPAS by investigating people's pension problems. Cases are sent to volunteers to investigate and the work is done either at home, or if they have a supportive employer, at their place of work. Volunteers decide how many cases they can deal with at any one time. New advisers are helped with their first few cases by being closely supported by members of our technical team, but once they are up and running continued support is available from volunteer Regional Organisers, as well as the technical team in London. We also have a dedicated adviser section on our website which includes guidance, standard paragraphs, and checklists. And every year we host workshops in which we debate and examine typical issues that arise.

The problems we send out to advisers to look at could be, for example, that a mistake was made in the calculation of a pension, the complainant disagrees with a decision, or they are unhappy about how long things took. Advisers deal directly with the complainant and their pension provider. Sometimes complaints are resolved by providing an independent and honest opinion on the rights and wrongs of the issue, and sometimes by negotiating compensation to redress the harm that was caused.

Volunteers use their wealth of pension experience to help complainants understand what is reasonable and why things need to be done in a certain way. But they also learn new skills in diplomacy, negotiation and understanding the perspectives of ordinary members of the public. We cannot please all of the people all of the time, but most complainants are genuinely appreciative and greatly value the independence and expertise a volunteer adviser can give.

So if you are thinking how you can use your skills and pension knowledge to help others we would love to hear from you. We are always on the lookout for pension professionals who either have 5 years' working experience of pensions and hold a relevant qualification, or, if they do not have a relevant qualification, have worked in pensions for at least 10 years. To find out more, visit: <http://www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk/about-us/become-an-adviser>.

## About

SPC is the representative body for the providers of advice and services needed to establish and operate occupational and personal pension schemes and related benefit provision. Our Members include accounting firms, solicitors, life offices, investment houses, investment performance measurers, consultants and actuaries, independent trustees and external pension administrators. Slightly more than half the Members are consultants and actuaries. SPC is the only body to focus on the whole range of pension related functions across the whole range of non-State provision, through such a wide spread of providers of advice and services. We have no remit to represent any particular type of provision.

The overwhelming majority of the 500 largest UK pension funds use the services of one or more of SPC's Members. Many thousands of individuals and smaller funds also do so. SPC's growing membership collectively employ some 15,000 people providing pension-related advice and services.

SPC's fundamental aims are:

- (a) to draw upon the knowledge and experience of Members, so as to contribute to legislation and other general developments affecting pensions and related benefits, and
- (b) to provide Members with services useful to their business.

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## THE SOCIETY OF PENSION CONSULTANTS

St Bartholomew House, 92 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1DG

TELEPHONE: 020 7353 1688 FACSIMILE: 020 7353 9296

EMAIL: [john.mortimer@spc.uk.com](mailto:john.mortimer@spc.uk.com) WEB: <http://www.spc.uk.com>

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