

# Pensions Newsletter

For deferred members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

## Contents

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Page 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pension Increase 2023</li> <li>• Member Self Service (MSS)</li> </ul> <p>Page 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transferring out</li> <li>• Your retirement claim forms</li> <li>• Death Grant Lump Sums</li> <li>• Contacting Us</li> </ul> | <p>Page 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pensions News</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## Pensions Increase 2023

The Government has confirmed that the annual increase to pensions this year is 10.1%. This is the equivalent of the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) for the 12 months ending September 2022. The increase was applied to pensions from 10 April 2023.

If your pension was awarded part way through the year, it has been increased by a proportion of the full amount in the first year and will increase by the full rate from next year.

## Member Self Service (MSS)

Your Annual Benefit Statement is available directly from your Member Self Service account.

Member Self Service (MSS) provides you with an easy and secure way to:

- View your pension account
- Amend your personal details, such as home address, nomination details
- Perform your own pension calculations and “what if” scenarios
- View Annual Benefit statements (ABS)

## Registering for Member Self Service (MSS)

If you haven't registered for Member Self Service visit: <https://mss.pensionssharedservice.org.uk/> and click on the “Register” button to start.

Members of the LGPS  
**Member Self Service is here**

Registering is simple -  
visit <https://mss.pensionssharedservice.org.uk/>  
and click on “Register” to start the process

Pensions Shared Service  
Camden • Merton • Richmond  
Waltham Forest • Wandsworth



## **Increase to the normal minimum pension age**

The date your LGPS pension is paid from without reductions is known as your normal pension age (NPA). You can find this date on your annual benefit statement. You can choose to take your pension earlier than this date (currently from age 55), but as it will be paid longer than expected, it will be reduced.

The earliest date you can start receiving your pension is set by the Government and is known as the normal minimum pension age (NMPA). This will increase to age 57 from 6 April 2028. If you started paying in before 3 November 2021, you may have a protected NMPA of age 55, and this change will not affect you. However, we won't be able to confirm this until the changes come into force.

## **Change to revaluation date**

A consultation was released in February 2023 by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to change the date that the cost-of-living adjustment is applied to CARE benefits in the LGPS. If you're a deferred member, these changes won't affect you. If you left the scheme before 1 April 2022, your benefits are adjusted to keep pace with the cost of living by Pensions Increase Orders rather than revaluation by the Treasury. The changes won't affect your pensions increase or the date on which it applies. If you left the scheme after 1 April 2022, the adjustment is awarded on 6 April but is backdated to 1 April.

## **Help with the rising cost of living**

The cost-of-living crisis is a national concern, and the Government has put certain support in place to try to help you if:

- you need support with your housing costs;
- you need support with your bills;
- you need support coping with disabilities; or
- you are generally finding things difficult and need someone to talk to.

For more information about this support, please visit: [www.gov.uk/cost-of-living](https://www.gov.uk/cost-of-living)

You can also visit <https://www.gov.uk/cost-living-help-local-council> for information about how you may be able to get help with essential costs from your local council.

Other national organisations, such as MoneyHelper, are also providing lots of support. This ranges from sharing tips for cutting back costs and making income go further, to highlighting scams, visit <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en>

## **Pension scams are on the rise**

Pension scams are on the rise in the UK. The people behind the scams are good at tricking savers into handing over their money. It's important that you have an idea of how to spot a pension scam, even if you think it could never happen to you. Some warning signs of a pension scam could be:

- someone calling you out of the blue, offering a free pension review;
- someone promising to get you better returns on your pension savings; or
- being pressured into making a quick decision about transferring your pension.

You can help to protect yourself by learning how to spot a scam. There's more information on the MoneyHelper website. If you're thinking about transferring your benefits out of the LGPS, you should always get impartial financial advice. Make sure that the company or person giving you the advice is registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

## Transferring out of the LGPS

You cannot transfer your benefits (other than AVCs) if you leave less than one year before your Normal Pension Age. An option to transfer (other than in respect of AVCs) must be made at least 12 months before your Normal Pension Age.

If a full transfer payment is made, you will not be entitled to any further benefits from the LGPS for yourself, your spouse, civil partner, eligible cohabiting partner or eligible children.

Further information about transferring out can be found here: [www.lgpsmember.org](http://www.lgpsmember.org)

If you are thinking of transferring your pension benefits out of the LGPS you should be aware that scammers operate in these markets – see the previous article .

## When will we send you claim forms for retirement?

You can draw your deferred benefits in the following ways:

- At your Normal Pension Age (NPA) without reduction
- Before NPA but possibly with early retirement reductions

You can now contact us at any point from age 55 to request early payment of your deferred benefits. You can use the benefit projectors in your Member Self Service account to find out how much you could receive. If you wish to claim deferred benefits earlier than your NPA please let us know in writing about 3 months prior to the date that you want to start receiving your pension benefits.

If we do not hear from you to request early payment we will write to you offering payment of your full pension benefits approximately 3 months before reaching your NPA.

## Lump sum death grant – have you expressed your wishes?

Log into your Member Self Service account and view and, if necessary, update to whom any death grant shall be paid.

As well as survivor pensions, we will pay a death grant if you die before you start drawing your deferred benefits. How we calculate the death grant will depend on when you left the scheme. Generally, if you left before 1 April 2008, the death grant will be equal to the deferred retirement grant; if you left on or after 1 April 2008, the death grant will be equal to five times your deferred annual pension.

Please note, if you return to active membership in LGPS (England or Wales), keep your deferred benefits separate from your new active record, and later die in service, multiple death grants will not be paid. Only the highest death grant available would be payable. The fund has complete discretion over who they pay the death grant to, although the fund will give full consideration to your 'Death Grant Nomination'.

## Contacting the Pensions Shared Service

Here are our contact details:

Post to: **Pensions Shared Service, PO Box 72351, London SW18 9LQ**

Email: [pensions@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:pensions@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk)

Please use our website <https://pensionssharedservice.org.uk/> for information before contacting us. Information about the scheme is also available at <https://lgpsmember.org/>