

Pensions Newsletter

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

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Pensions Increase 2024

The Government has confirmed that the annual increase to pensions this year is 6.7%. This is the equivalent of the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) for the 12 months ending September 2023. The increase was applied to pensions from 8 April 2024.

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



Frequently Asked Questions about Annual Benefit Statements

- **Does the current value of my benefits include reductions for taking them early?**

Reductions aren't included in the current value of your benefits. If you take your pension benefits before your normal pension age, your pension and any lump sum is usually reduced. You can view the early retirement reductions by using the benefit projectors in your Member Self Service (MSS) account.

- **I paid additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) whilst contributing into this deferred pension, are they included in the statement?**

No, your AVC provider will contact you with a separate statement.

- **I paid extra LGPS contributions whilst contributing into this deferred pension, are they included in the statement?**

Yes, any added years, additional regular contributions (ARCs), or additional pension contributions (APCs) that you have purchased are included within your current value on your statement.

The McCloud remedy

When public service pension schemes changed from final salary schemes to career average schemes in 2014 and 2015, older members were protected from the changes.

In 2018, the Courts found that younger members had been discriminated against because the protection did not apply to them. Changes made to the LGPS from 1 October 2023 removes the discrimination found in the court case. These changes are called the McCloud remedy. Not all LGPS members are affected by the changes. You can find more information on the national LGPS website, including a short video. Please visit www.lgpsmember.org/mccloud-remedy/

If you are affected, you do not need to write into the pension fund or make any decisions. If you are contacted by a third party organisation selling a service to help you claim additional pension, you should not engage with them.

As a member of the LGPS, you do not need to take any action to claim your protection under the McCloud remedy. If you qualify, we will automatically apply the protection when you take your LGPS pension.

Protect yourself from scams

Scams can be sophisticated, but if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

For more advice on the basic steps everyone should take to avoid scams, check out:

<https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/money-troubles/scams/a-beginners-guide-to-scams>

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

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

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