

Member newsletter (active) – April 2022

An update for active members in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

We are pleased to provide our latest newsletter to help members keep up to date with the East Sussex Pension Fund (ESPF). In this bumper edition you will find an articles on:

- **Member Self-Service** – a system which provides 24 hour online access to your pension.
- **Pension scams** - Find out how to spot, avoid and report pension scams.
- **Member survey** – Are we getting things right?
- **Lifetime allowance** – a reminder to notify HRMC if lifetime allowance protection is lost
- **Contribution levels** - From April 2022 employee contribution salary bandings will change.
- **Top up your retirement savings** – pay extra now to boost income in later life.
- **Expression of wish** – Looking after loved ones.
- **New LGPS member website launched** – new brand, new website to aid user experience
- **ESPF website** – a great source of information for members of the LGPS.
- **Glossary** – ever been confused by pensions jargon...let us help.
- **Privacy notice** - Find out how we use your personal data.
- **McCloud judgement** – An update.
- **Getting in touch** – A reminder of how to contact us for support.

The East Sussex Pension Fund have been awarded the 2021 Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Fund of the year (assets over £2.5 billion) in the Local Authorities Pension Fund Investments Awards. The Fund was also highly commended for 'Best climate change strategy' reflecting the work done to address both the challenges and the opportunities presented by climate change, sustainability, and the energy transition. . The Awards have come to be recognised as a mark of excellence in the field of pensions provision in the LGPS.

Note: The 2021 awards were only held on 29th March 2022 due to the pandemic.

We are always looking for ways to develop and engage with our members so please contact me at paul.linfield@eastsussex.gov.uk with any ideas or further support you require.

Best wishes

Paul Linfield
Pension Communication Manager

Member self-service (MSS)

Your pension at your fingertips

Did you know that we have an online Member Self Service Portal where you can:

- Update personal information such as your address or bank details
- Amend or add who you want to nominate to receive benefits on death
- View Annual Benefit Statements (ABS)– keeping you up to date with the pension benefits you've built up
- Use benefit projectors including:
 - Deferred benefits – calculate how much your pension would be worth if you defer payment from your normal pension age
 - Voluntary retirement – calculate how much your pension would be worth if you were to voluntarily retire
 - Death in service - calculate how much your pension would be worth if you were die whilst in service
- [Contact us](#)

Registration is simple

[Follow these steps](#)

Existing users

[Log in](#) and remind yourself what the portal has to offer

If you require any assistance with MSS then please contact the MSS helpline on: 0300 200 1027

Pension scams

Don't let a scammer ruin your retirement

Pension scams are on the rise in the UK. The internet and advances in digital communications mean these kinds of scams are getting more common and harder to identify. There are different types of pension scam, but they can all lead to the possibility of you losing a lifetime's worth of savings in a moment.

The Government introduced some new pension transfer rules on 30th November last year to help prevent people becoming victims of pension scams. Pension schemes now have new powers to refuse a request to transfer a pension to another pension scheme if there is a risk it might be a scam. The changes remove an individual's automatic right to a transfer and require pension schemes to complete several additional tasks to satisfy themselves that a member's pension benefits are not at risk.

We may contact you to find out more information about the scheme you want to transfer to, how you were contacted and who advised you about the transfer. It is important that you answer our questions fully as soon as you can. We may stop the transfer if you do not provide the information required, or if that information indicates that you are likely to be at risk of a scam.

You may be required to attend a Pension Safeguarding Guidance appointment given by MoneyHelper. Transfers between Public Sector schemes are not affected by this new legislation.

If you are worried or would like more information on scams then please check out these links.

Useful resources

ESPF website – [Avoiding Pension Scams](#)

MoneyHelper – [How to spot a Pension Scam](#)

Financial Conduct Authority – [How to avoid Pension Scams](#)

Member Survey 2022 – coming soon

Please tell us what you think. Your views matter.

Your Pension is important and so is making sure we deliver a first-class service to support you.

But do we do enough?

We will shortly be publishing our latest member survey where you can have your say. We will be contacting you via email with instructions on how to complete the survey soon.

Lifetime allowance - a reminder

A reminder to notify HMRC if lifetime allowance protection is lost

The [lifetime allowance](#) is the total value of all pension benefits you can have without triggering an excess benefits tax charge. In the 2021 Spring Budget the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, announced that the pensions lifetime allowance will be frozen at £1,073,100 until April 2026. HMRC allowed members with substantial pension pots to apply for protection against these charges. You need to notify HMRC if your protection has been lost. Details of how are [detailed in this guidance](#).

Changes to employee contributions

Salary thresholds and contribution rates change from April 2022

The salary thresholds which dictate how much employees contribute to their pension from April 2022 are [now available on our website](#).

Need to top up your retirement savings?

You can pay extra now to boost your income in later life.

Most of us look forward to a happy and comfortable retirement. You may wish to consider paying extra pension contributions now to boost your income in later life. There are two ways you can pay extra contributions in the LGPS. You can pay Additional Pension Contributions, Additional Voluntary Contributions* or both. You can also pay extra outside of the LGPS to increase your retirement income.

[Find out more here](#)

*ESPF has selected Prudential (a leading savings and investments business) as our chosen provider for AVCs. The plan has a number of investment options to choose from. Deciding to take out an AVC plan is an important financial decision so we recommend that you [get guidance](#) and/or independent financial advice to help you decide if this route is most suitable for you.

If you are interested in paying AVCs please call the Prudential on 0345 6000 343.

Are you looking after your loved ones?

Nominating a beneficiary

With an LGPS pension, you have the added reassurance of knowing that your loved ones will be looked after when you're gone. If you die before taking your pension, it provides a tax-free lump sum to the people you care about most. You can express a wish as to whom you would like to receive this lump sum (also known as your death grant), by nominating a beneficiary. The easiest way to do this is via our Member Self-Service Portal (see above). By nominating sooner rather than later, it can save your loved ones a great deal of time and effort further down the line.

You can nominate your spouse or partner, son or daughter, family member or lifelong friend, a charity that's close to your heart or a combination of beneficiaries.

While your pension scheme has absolute discretion over who your death grant goes to (so it doesn't form part of your estate for tax purposes), they will take your wishes/nomination into account.

Choosing a loved one as your nominated beneficiary has many benefits:

- Gives you peace of mind that your lump sum goes to the right people
- Ensures your money is distributed fairly and securely
- Helps make sorting out your finances far less stressful for family and friends

Nominate your beneficiary today by visiting our Member Self-Service Portal (My Pension):

[Log in](#) – Member Self-Service Portal

[Register](#) - Member Self-Service Portal

New LGPS member Website launch

Simple, Friendly, Confident

The Local Government Pension Scheme has just transformed their brand and website to improve the user experience for members. There is so much great content to support members of the LGPS in England and Wales.

[Visit the website](#)

The ESPF Website

Everything you need in one place

Are you aware that the East Sussex Pension Fund also has its own website dedicated to supporting members, beneficiaries and employers of the pension scheme? It does and has recently been refreshed. The website holds a comprehensive range of information to support you in your retirement journey. It's certainly worth familiarising yourself with the site. We've recently added some video content and made some changes to the layout of the site following feedback from members to make the user journey as simplistic as possible.

[ESPF main website address](#)

Some areas to explore:

[Paying in](#) – a whole section dedicated to active members of the scheme looking at areas such as membership and contributions, how the scheme works, what happens on your death and more.

[Investment](#) - it's our job to invest member and employer contributions to help fund the pensions that we pay now and those that we will be paying in the future. This section explains how we do this.

[Resources](#) – you can access forms, guides to the scheme, policies, and other key resources.

Pension terminology...explained

A glossary of terms to help navigate the world of pensions

You can now get to grips with pensions and retirement jargon with our handy glossary of some of the most frequently used pension terms in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

[Access glossary here](#)

Privacy notice - updated

How we use your personal data

We hold information (personal data) on you to administer the Pension Fund. Find out how we use your data by [accessing the Full Privacy notice here](#).

We have recently added the following:

We do not use your personal data for marketing purposes and will not share this data with anyone for the purpose of marketing to you or any beneficiary. However, we may use your data to send surveys and other documents to you to help us improve the quality of service we provide.

We have also made changes to clarify the situation now that the UK is no longer part of the European Union.

McCloud judgement

No need to apply for the new underpin

When the LGPS changed from a final salary to a career average pension scheme in 2014, protections for older scheme members were introduced - known as the underpin. The Court of Appeal ruled that younger members of the Judges' and Firefighters' Pension schemes have been discriminated against because the protections didn't apply to them. The Government decided that the principles established to remove this discrimination will apply to all public sector pension schemes including the LGPS.

The proposed changes would mean that a revised underpin will apply to members, **regardless of their age**, who:

- Were active on 31 March 2012.
- Built up benefits in the 2014 Scheme (This is the current Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales which was introduced from April 2014)
- Do not have a disqualifying break of more than 5 years.

If you fit the qualifying criteria and your benefits would be better, the underpin will be automatically applied. You do not need to apply for this.

Contact the Fund

We are here to help you. If you'd like to get in touch by email or phone, please [visit our contact us page](#) on the website.

If you are looking for free guidance on Pensions please visit the [MoneyHelper website](#).

MoneyHelper joins up money and pensions guidance to make it quicker and easier to find the right help, MoneyHelper brings together the support and services of three government-backed financial guidance providers: the Money Advice Service, the Pensions Advisory Service and Pension Wise.