lgps

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

Deferred Member News

For more information visit: www.lgpsmember.org | **Summer 2026**

Welcome to the 2026 LGPS newsletter. This newsletter is for people who paid into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). It's written with help from other LGPS funds. To learn more about your pension, go to: **www.rbkcpensionfund.org**

'Engage' Self Service portal

The RBKC Pensions self-service portal is the easiest and quickest way to keep track of your pension, notify us of change of address, complete your nomination details, and view your Annual Benefit Statement.

We have recently launched 'Engage', an upgraded member portal with enhanced features and a more personalised, user-friendly experience.

If this is your first time signing into 'Engage' all users are required to 'Create an account' - even if you're already registered for the previous portal – 'My Pension Online'.

Create your 'Engage' account here: https://mypension.rbkc.gov.uk/login and click **'create account'** to get started. You will only have to complete this step once.

If you have any issues accessing the portal, please contact the Pensions Team where someone will be able to help you.

Pensions made simple

If you'd like a clearer understanding of your LGPS pension and the options available to you as a scheme member, but don't have much time, the Pensions Made Simple videos are perfect to watch.

These short videos offer a quick summary of important topics, including "How your pension works," "Protection for you and your family," "Life after work," and "The McCloud remedy."

To watch the videos, visit: www.lgpsmember.org/help-and-support/videos/

Scheme Changes
– Improving access and fairness in the LGPS

The Government has confirmed a series of changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to make the LGPS fairer for all members. Most changes took effect from 1 April 2026, and some applied retrospectively. The following is a summary of the key changes and what they may mean for you.

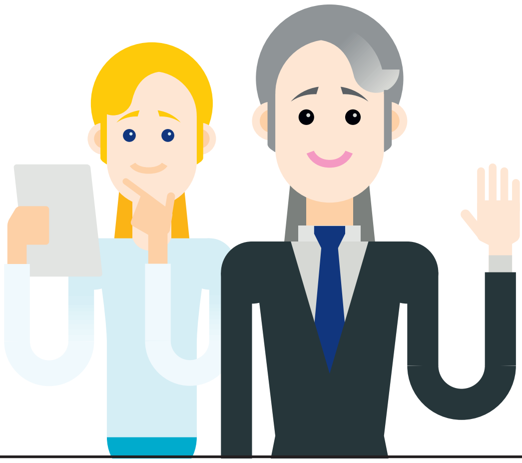
Fairer survivor benefits
From 1 April 2026, survivor pensions are calculated more consistently to ensure equal treatment regardless of the sex of the deceased member or their surviving spouse/civil partner.

Changes to death grants
There are also changes to the rules around death grants:

- **Age limit removed:** A lump sum death grant may now be paid even if a member dies after age 75. This is backdated to 1 April 2014. We are working to identify any new death grants in respect of members who died after age 75 since April 2014. Where applicable, we will contact the beneficiaries or personal representatives to arrange payment of the death grant. Interest for late payment will be added.
- **More flexibility:** Pension funds can now use discretion to decide who receives a late death grant. This means the death grant will be taxed at each beneficiary's marginal rate of tax, rather than the 45% charge that applies when it is paid to personal representatives. A 'late' death grant is usually one that is not paid within two years of the date of death.

The Normal Minimum Pension Age (NMPA) is changing

The Normal Minimum Pension Age (NMPA) is the earliest age you can usually take your pension benefits.
The NMPA is currently 55, but it is due to increase to 57 from 6 April 2028. This change does not apply if you take your pension early due to ill health.



What does this mean for me?
If you were born after 5 April 1973: The earliest age you can take your pension will increase to 57.

If you were born between 6 April 1971 and 5 April 1973: You can choose to take your pension between age 55 and 5 April 2028 (the day before the NMPA increases). If you do not take your pension before this date, you will need to wait until age 57.

If you were born on or before 5 April 1971: You will already be age 57 by 6 April 2028, so this change will not affect you.

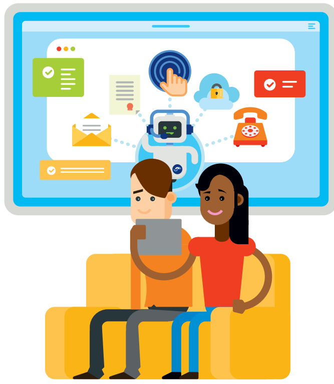
Will I be protected from the increase in NMPA?
Some members may be entitled to a protected pension age of 55, meaning they could still take their benefits before age 57.

This may apply if:

- you were a member of the LGPS in England and Wales before 4 November 2021, or
- you transferred pension benefits into the LGPS and meet certain conditions.

The Government has consulted on proposals to allow eligible LGPS members to retain a protected pension age. However, final regulations have not yet been confirmed, and the position may still change.

We will provide further updates once the regulations are finalised. You can also keep up to date at GOV.UK



Pensions Dashboards update

You may have picked up from previous communications from the Fund about the introduction of Pensions Dashboards.

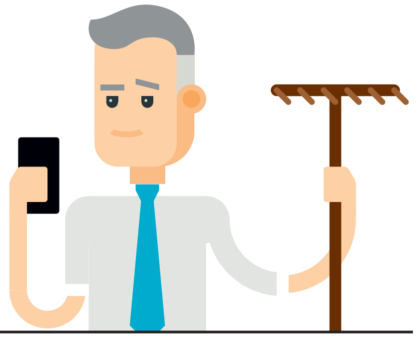
In the past twelve months, the pension fund has connected to pensions dashboards digital ecosystem, and we are now reporting Scheme member pensions data.

Pensions Dashboards are an online tool which will allow you to securely locate and view all your pension information in one place including your LGPS benefits, State pension and any other pension savings you may have accumulated over the years.

We don't yet know when dashboards will be available to the public.

For more information on pensions dashboards, please visit:
www.pensionsdashboardsprogramme.org.uk

Planning your retirement income



Thinking about how much income you'll need in retirement is an important step in planning your future. The Retirement Living Standards can help you picture what life after work might look like – and what it might cost.

What are the Retirement Living Standards?
The standards were developed by Loughborough University and describe three lifestyles in retirement:

- **Minimum** - covering basic needs, with little left over for extras
- **Moderate** - offering more financial comfort and flexibility
- **Comfortable** - providing greater choice, security and leisure

They estimate typical spending on everyday essentials like housing costs, food, transport, clothing and leisure. The figures are updated regularly to reflect changes in prices and living expectations.

How much income might you need?
Based on the 2026 figures, the estimated yearly income needed is:

For a single person

- £13,900 - minimum lifestyle
- £32,700 - moderate
- £45,400 - comfortable

For a couple

- £22,500 - minimum lifestyle
- £45,400 - moderate
- £62,700 - comfortable

You can find out more about what each lifestyle includes at:
www.retirementlivingstandards.org.uk

Everyone's retirement is different
These figures are a helpful guide, but they won't be the same for everyone. Your own costs may be higher or lower depending on things like:

- Whether you still have a mortgage or rent to pay
- Any health or care costs
- Tax on your pension income
- Your hobbies, travel plans or family commitments

It's worth thinking about what you want your retirement to look like and setting your own personal income target.

Where will your retirement income come from?
Once you have an idea of how much income you might need, the next step is to look at what income you're likely to have.

1. State Pension
The full State Pension for 2026/27 is £12,548 a year. This goes a long way towards meeting the minimum standard for a single person.

Couples where both partners receive the full State Pension would usually meet the minimum standard together.

You can check your State Pension forecast at:
www.gov.uk/check-state-pension

2. Other income
Your retirement income may also come from:

- Your LGPS pension
- Any additional payments you make, like AVCs or APCs
- Other workplace or personal pensions
- Savings or investments

If you have lost track of an old pension, the Pension Tracing Service can help:
www.findpensioncontacts.service.gov.uk

Checking your LGPS benefits
You can log in to your LGPS online 'Engage' member portal at any time to view an estimate of your benefits. This includes:

- Your expected pension at retirement
- Estimates for early retirement
- Any reductions that may apply

Taking time to review your expected income alongside your likely spending can help you feel more confident and better prepared for retirement.

Are your nominated beneficiaries up to date?

As a deferred member of the LGPS, if you die before taking your pension, a lump sum death grant may be paid.

The amount payable depends on when you left:

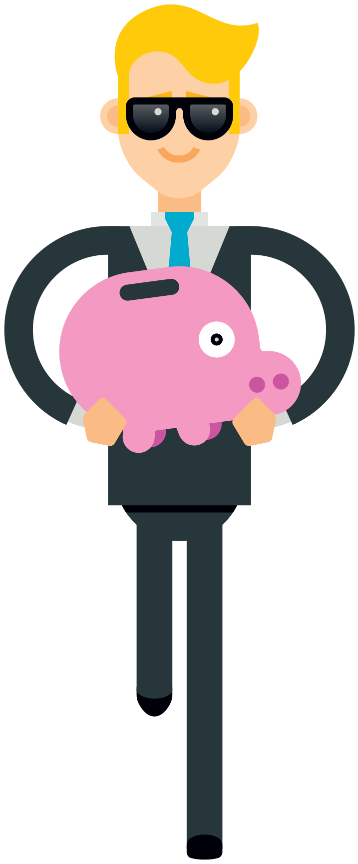
- **Left after 31 March 2008**
  A lump sum equal to five times your deferred annual pension is payable.
- **Left before 1 April 2008**
  A lump sum equal to three times your deferred annual pension is payable.

However, if you are also an active member of the LGPS when you die, the death grant payable is the higher of your deferred death grant as calculated above, or the death grant payable in respect of your active membership.

If you hold more than one deferred LGPS benefit, a separate death grant will be payable from each deferred benefit, provided you are not also an active LGPS member at the time of your death.

You can complete an "expression of wish" to tell the Fund who you would like to receive any death grant. While any expression made is not legally binding, it helps guide the Fund's decision. The Fund retains absolute discretion over the final payment. If you are considering nominating a child under age 18, you may wish to seek independent legal advice, particularly about setting up a trust.

To make or update your expression, you can fill in an "expression of wish" form, available to download from our website, or via the 'Engage' self-service portal. We recommend reviewing your nomination regularly and updating it if your personal circumstances change.



Pension scams

The number of pension scams continues to rise, so it's more important than ever to understand how to protect your money and recognise the warning signs.

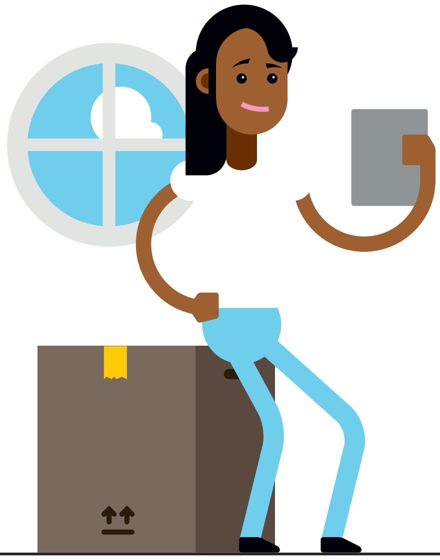
Scammers often pretend to be from genuine pension providers. They may contact you unexpectedly by email, text message, social media or through illegal cold calls. They might offer a free review of your finances or claim you can access your pension before the normal minimum pension age (currently 55 increasing to 57 from 06 April 2028).

Their aim is to persuade you to transfer your pension savings to them by promising high returns with little or no risk.

To reduce the likelihood of being scammed:

- Reject unexpected offers, unsolicited messages or cold calls
- Always check who you are dealing with on the Financial Services Register: https://register.fca.org.uk/s/
- Read The Pension Regulator's leaflet on pension scams: www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/pension-scams
- Do not be rushed or pressured into making decisions
- Get free, impartial guidance from MoneyHelper: www.moneyhelper.org.uk

If you receive a phone call or email that appears to be from us, but you are unsure, do not share any personal or financial information. **Contact us directly to confirm whether the communication is genuine.**



Deferred FAQs

What are deferred benefits?
Your annual benefit statement shows the pension we have calculated that will be payable if you claim it from your normal pension age (NPA). If you are over 65 and older than your NPA, your annual statement will also include increases for retiring after your NPA.

What is my NPA?
Your Normal Pension Age (NPA) is the date from which your LGPS pension can be paid without any reductions. This age is different for each member and depends on when you left the scheme.

- If you left after 1 April 2014, your NPA is linked to your State Pension age.
- If you left between 1 October 2006 and 1 April 2014, your NPA is 65.
- If you left before 1 October 2006, your NPA is normally 65 but could be as early as 60

If you're unsure of your State Pension age, you can check it online at: gov.uk/state-pension-age

When can I take my deferred benefits?
Currently, you can take your deferred benefits at any age between 55 and 75, as long as you have left the job those benefits are linked to.

You can take your benefits:

- **From age 55 to your Normal Pension Age (NPA):** You can take your benefits early, although they will usually be reduced.
- **At your NPA:** You can take your benefits in full, with no reduction.
- **After your NPA (up to age 75):** Your benefits may increase as they are being paid later. However, if you left the LGPS before 1 April 1998, you must take your pension by your NPA.
- **Before your NPA due to ill health:** If approved by your former employer, you may be able to take your benefits early without any reduction.

The Government has announced that the earliest age you can take your pension, other than for ill-health reasons, will increase to 57 from 6 April 2028.

How much will I get if I take my benefits before my NPA?
If you choose to take your deferred benefits before your Normal Pension Age (NPA), they will usually be reduced. This is because your pension is likely to be paid over a longer period of time.

You can use the benefit projectors available on the 'Engage' member self-service portal to help you work out how much your pension might be if taken before NPA. See 'Engage' section of this newsletter for more information about how to register and access the portal.

I paid additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) before I left – what happens with those?
If you paid AVCs before you left, your AVC provider will continue to send you a separate annual statement. Your provider may also have a portal you can access to view your AVC pot.

When you choose to claim your LGPS pension, we will include your AVCs into the options we provide to you.

I can't work because of ill health, so can I take my deferred benefits?
If you can't work because of ill health, you may be able to have your benefits paid without reductions, whatever your age.

If you think this may apply to you, you should contact your former employer. They will arrange for an independent registered medical practitioner to provide an opinion, to help with their decision.

Do my deferred benefits keep their value against inflation?
Yes. Each April, the value of your deferred pension is adjusted, based on the Consumer Price Index from the previous September. The standard increase applied from 6 April 2026 was 3.8%.

If you became a deferred member before 22 April 2025, you'll get the full increase. However, if you became a deferred member after that date, your pension increase will normally only be a proportion of the full increase.

Can I transfer my deferred benefits to another pension scheme?
If you meet certain conditions, you may be able to transfer your deferred benefits to another pension scheme. Transferring your pension is an important decision and one that you should think about carefully. Contact the pensions team for more information about transferring your pension.

If you join another public sector pension scheme, you will usually need to register your interest in transferring your deferred LGPS pension within 12 months of joining your new scheme. Your new pension scheme will be able to provide more information about the transfer process and your options.

What happens to my deferred benefits if I die?
A death grant may be paid as a lump sum, and the amount depends on when you left the scheme:

- If you stopped paying LGPS contributions before 1 April 2008, the death grant is three times your deferred pension.
- If you stopped paying contributions on or after 1 April 2008, the death grant is five times your deferred pension.

If you are also still paying LGPS contributions for a different job at the time of your death, only the highest death grant will be paid. If you have a linked Additional Voluntary Contribution (AVC) fund, the value of the fund at your date of death will be paid with the death grant.

Please see the 'Are your nominated beneficiaries up to date?' section of this newsletter for details on how to nominate a beneficiary to receive any death grant that is due or how to update an existing nomination.

A survivor's pension may also be paid to your dependants, such as:

- your spouse or civil partner;
- any eligible children; or
- someone you live with as if you were married (if you were still paying LGPS contributions on or after 1 April 2008).

How do I update my personal details?
You can update your information by logging into the 'Engage' self-service portal. See 'Engage' section of this newsletter for more information about how to register and access the portal. If you change your name, partnership status or gender, we need to see a copy of the relevant legal document.

Contact the RBKC pensions team

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the pensions team:

020 7361 2323 (9am – 5pm working days)
pensions@rbkc.gov.uk
www.rbkcpensionfund.org
RBKC Pensions, 3rd Floor, The Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8 7NX