

yourpension

LPFA Fund pensioners' newsletter - Spring 2005

Pensions increase 2005

The Government has approved the rate of increase for all public service pensions and state scheme benefits. The increase is effective from 11th April 2005 and is 3.1%.

The increase is set by reference to the Retail Price Index in September. It does not reflect the performance of the LPFA Pension Fund and we do not have the power to pay any additional increase.

Your pension will be increased with effect from 11th April 2005 if you:

- are aged 55 or over, or
- are receiving a spouse's, widower's, beneficiary's or child's pension, or
- retired on ill health grounds.

If you do not fall into one of these groups, your pension will still attract the increase, but it will not be paid until your 55th birthday.

If your pension is currently suspended due to re-employment, any increase will not be paid until it is reinstated.

During 2005 the LPFA proposes to introduce a new style of payslip. The printing on the new payslip will be clearer as we will be using a laser printer, rather than the current impact printer, and the paper used will be better quality.



Late last year the Bolton Tax Office changed its address and phone number. The new details are Inland Revenue East Lancashire Area, (Ref: 106/G2000) 9-11 Minden Parade, Bury, BL9 0QN.

Telephone: **0845 302 1441**

Pensioners who live abroad and wish to telephone the tax office should use the following number **0044 0151 210 2222**

If you have any suggestions about other topics or human interest stories to include in future editions, please write to the LPFA or telephone the local rate number **0845 30 30 335**.

Don't forget ... if you move house, or your personal circumstances change in any way that could affect your pension ... please tell us straightaway so that we can amend our records.

We do, however, need this information in writing to satisfy our internal auditors.

Alison Alcock
Payroll Manager

Calculating pensions increase

Pensions increase is calculated on the annual pension in payment at the end of March 2005, less any Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) notified to you by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

It is not calculated on the figure on your P60 as this amount represents the actual pension paid to you during the financial year April 2004 to March 2005.

GMP and pensions increase

The increase on your GMP * will be paid by the DWP as an addition to your State retirement pension and usually applies to those pensions which arose as a result of employment between 6th April 1978 and 5th April 1997.

If the LPFA has not been notified by the DWP of the amount of your GMP, the increase will be calculated using an estimated value, with any under or overpayment adjusted later. A leaflet explaining GMP in detail is available by calling the local rate number **0845 30 30 335**.

* The DWP refers to GMP as 'Contracted Out Deduction' (COD).

Payment and dispatch of payslips

The increase will be paid with your April pension payment and a payslip will be sent to you at the end of April showing the increase for the period 11th to 30th April.

Another payslip will be sent to you at the end of May to show your increased pension for a full month and **should be retained as a record of your normal monthly pension payment.**

You will not be sent a payslip in any of the months which follow, unless your net pension has changed by more than 50 pence from the previous month or you have had a change in your address, banking or tax details.

If you pay tax, you may notice a 10 pence or 22 pence difference in the net pension you receive because tax calculations are based on the pension paid over the tax year to date rather than on individual monthly payments.

Tax Codes - When you receive a new tax code from the Inland Revenue please check that the LPFA apply the same code.

If your pension began on or before 26th April 2004 your pension increase is 3.1%. If your pension began after this date a smaller, pro-rata, increase will apply as shown in the table below.

Pensions beginning:	increase	Pensions beginning:	increase
		27 th September to 26 th October 2004	1.55%
27 th April to 26 th May 2004	2.84%	27 th October to 26 th November 2004	1.29%
27 th May to 26 th June 2004	2.58%	27 th November to 26 th December 2004	1.03%
27 th June to 26 th July 2004	2.33%	27 th December to 26 th January 2005	0.78%
27 th July to 26 th August 2004	2.07%	27 th January to 26 th February 2005	0.52%
27 th August to 26 th September 2004	1.81%	27 th February to 26 th March 2005	0.26%

P60s and self assessment tax returns

Your P60 will be sent to you in the middle of April. The P60 is a certificate of pension paid and tax deducted for the tax year April 2004 to March 2005. It is important that you retain your P60, as you will need it should you be asked to complete a self assessment tax return.

When completing self assessment tax returns, please note that the figures provided on the P60 are the gross taxable pension paid in the year (i.e. the amount of your pension before tax is deducted) and the tax deducted in the year. You will need to subtract the amount of tax deducted from the gross taxable pension to arrive at the net amount paid in the year. These three amounts all need to be entered on the self assessment tax return.

If you are in receipt of a 'tax exempt' injury pension awarded because of an injury that occurred while you were working or as a result of contracting a work related illness, the amount of the injury pension paid is not shown on your P60. It is not necessary for you to enter the amount of the injury pension on the self assessment tax return.

Pensioners living abroad

Please note that with effect from April 2005 the charges made by the Bank of Scotland for those pensioners receiving their pension payment via the Trans-continental Automated Payment Service (TAPS) will increase from £3.14 to £3.23 for direct payments and from £8.19 to £8.44 for indirect payments.

If you live abroad and are paid by cheque, you may wish to consider this safer method of payment. The LPFA can also pay your pension quarterly, in arrears, so that the TAPS charges are reduced. For more information please contact us on **0845 30 30 335**.

State benefits

In April 2005, the basic state pension will increase by 2.8% to £82.05 per week for a single person and to £49.15 per week for a dependent wife.

Data to help beat fraud

The Audit Commission has used its legal right to request personal and payroll information from the LPFA to help investigate potential fraudulent use of public funds.

Frequently asked questions

What is the NFI?

The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is the Audit Commission's data matching exercise. Its role is to detect fraudulent and incorrect payments from the public purse.

Why does the information have to be provided?

The LPFA is required under Section 6 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 to participate in the NFI data matching exercise.

What information will be given?

Where relevant, the following data will be collected:

- Employee number
- Title or gender
- Surname and forename
- Address
- Date of birth
- Date pension commenced
- National Insurance number
- Gross pension to date so far this year

What happens with our information?

Payroll data will be used for cross-reference and cross-authority comparison for the prevention and detection of fraud.

What if I do not want my details released?

It's a legal requirement and it is allowed by the Data Protection Act.

Fund Members' Forum 2005

LPFA's next Forum for Fund members will take place on Tuesday, 6th September 2005 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, Westminster.

This year 25 organisations (shown opposite) have already indicated that they wish to be part of our information centre. The Authority is also pleased to say that we have booked an extra room which will allow far more seating than in previous years.

If you have any suggestions for the Forum, especially with regard to organisations that you would like to see at the Information Centre, please contact Paul Pennant on 020 7369 6005.



LPFA's Chairman introduces Forum 2004

The format of the Forum will be similar to that of previous years and will include:

- Information Centre open at 10 am
- Formal presentations begin at 11 am
- Chairman's Introduction
- Chief Executive's Review of the Year
- Open Forum - Question time
- Information Centre - light refreshments available - 1 pm

Age Concern - www.ageconcern.org.uk
CASH-Consensus Action on Salt and Health
www.actionsalt.org.uk
Citizens' Advice Bureaux -
www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Counsel and Care -
www.counselandcare.org.uk
Dart – Transport for All -
www.transportforall.com
English Heritage -
www.english-heritage.org.uk
Greater London Forum -
www.seniorsworld.co.uk/glf
HOPE - www.hope-for-children.org
Inland Revenue -
www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk
IR Capital Taxes – Inheritance Tax
www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/cto
London Cycle Network -
www.lcc.org.uk
Metropolitan Police -
www.met.police.uk
Older People's Resource Facility -
www.london.gov.uk
OPAS The Pensions Advisory Service
www.opas.org.uk
The Pension Service -
www.thepensionservice.gov.uk
Open House -
www.openhouselondon.org
Postwatch - www.postwatch.co.uk/
Prince's Trust -
www.princes-trust.org.uk
REACH - www.reach-online.org.uk
Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme
www.csv-rsvp.org.uk
Ricability - www.ricability.org.uk
RNIB - www.rnib.org.uk
RNID - www.rnid.org.uk
Westminster Fire Brigade -
www.london-fire.gov.uk

If you would like to attend the Forum on 6th September 2005, please complete and return the enclosed application, or contact 020 7369 6005, or e-mail forum@lpfa.org.uk

If you or your guests have any personal requirements such as disabled parking, a signer, or wheelchair access, please indicate this on the form and we will do our best to accommodate your needs. Tickets will be limited to the first 800 applicants.

Thursday 16th June 2005
RNID England Conference
contact Louise French
tel 0207 296 8181
text phone 0207 296 8294
fax 0207 296 8199
email louise.french@rnid.org.uk

Sunday 21st August 2005
Capital Age Festival 2005
Organised by the London Older People's Strategies Group (LOPSG) Bernie Spain Gardens, Upper Ground, SE1. For more information please contact Charlotte Smith on 020 7369 2689

Tuesday 6th September 2005
LPFA Fund Members' Forum
Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre
Contact Paul Pennant
telephone 020 7369 6005

September 12th to 18th.
"Know Your Numbers!"®
Your pension isn't the only set of numbers you could be thinking about today - you could also do with keeping an eye on your blood pressure!

High blood pressure causes half of all strokes and heart attacks in the UK. Sixteen million people have the condition and, because there are usually no symptoms, 5.3 million just don't know it. Yet once detected, through a very quick and simple test, high blood pressure is a controllable condition. That's why the Blood Pressure Association (BPA) believes it's so important for you to "Know Your Numbers!"®

Through medication and/or lifestyle changes - reducing salt intake, losing weight if overweight, being active, eating more fruit and vegetables and cutting down on alcohol - we can all reduce blood pressure if high, or guard against developing the condition in later life.

Look out for testing stations in supermarkets, chemists and other high street outlets during the BPA's 5th National Blood Pressure Awareness Week which runs **September 12th to 18th**.

For more information, please visit the BPA at www.bpassoc.org.uk or call 020 8772 4994, quoting ref: LP1

Dates for your diary

17/18th September 2005
Open House London will again be holding its popular London Open House weekend this year, on 17/18 September, when over 500 buildings in the Capital will be open free to the public.
More information on obtaining advance information is available on www.londonopenhouse.org.uk

Friday 25th November 2005
For the past 9 years some retired members of the Non-Tidal Rivers Division of the Department of Public Health Engineering in the former GLC, have been meeting every year at 11:30am on the last Friday of November at the Institution of Civil Engineers.

After chatting till about 12 noon we repair to the bar and have a cafeteria lunch. We break up about 3pm.

Members who had been attending so far are Messrs Butter, Bukkivant, Allan Wright, V Moorthy, T Moorthy, Watts, John de Souza and Miss de Souza and Miss Shirley Count.

We would be pleased to welcome many more, including wives, and also former members of the Tidal Division as well.

If you are interested please contact

Lt Col DD John De Souza
86 Holmbury Grove
Featherbed Lane
Croydon
Surrey CR0 9AQ
020 8651 3489

Local Government Pension Scheme

The amendments to the LGPS mentioned in the Winter newsletter come into force on 1st April 2005.

These amendments affect members currently contributing to the scheme and are as follows:

- The earliest retirement age is increasing from 50 to 55, except for those retiring on ill-health and those of you who are protected from the change.
- Those who retire before age 65 will have their benefits reduced to take account of early payment unless the employer waives the reduction on compassionate grounds or they are protected from the change.

These changes to the LGPS form the second phase of the current review of the Scheme, known as the Stocktake. The third and final phase is being consulted on right now. It aims to modernise the scheme so that it meets the needs of the current local government workforce. Partners' pensions, flexible retirement options and improved death benefits together with increased contributions for employees are just some of the things being considered.

Government Ministers have expressed their commitment to retaining a defined benefit final salary arrangement which is relevant to the local government workforce provided that it remains both affordable and sustainable to scheme members, scheme employers and tax payers.

More information on the next phase of the review is available at www.xoq83.dial.pipex.com/gpfvb

Further information about your pension rights is available from LPFA at Dexter House.

Cut your council Tax

Find out if you should be paying less

Council Tax Benefit can help people on a low income pay some or all of their Council Tax bill, even if they own their own home.

But currently, many people who are entitled to Council Tax Benefit - including up to 1.7 million pensioners - don't claim it.

An advertising campaign promoting the message 'Cut your Council Tax – find out if you should be paying less' has started to stop pensioners missing out on an average £426 towards their council tax bills.

Some pensioners are missing out on a 100 per cent rebate. On top they may be due up to 12 months arrears, bringing a possible extra cash windfall.

Council Tax Benefit Minister, Chris Pond, says: "My message to pensioners is - don't pay more than you need to. If you are entitled to Council Tax Benefit, I want you to get every penny owed.

"If in doubt, there's no harm in checking - contact your local council to see if you are entitled.

"Claiming is easier than ever, we've made the claim form shorter and new rules mean once you've successfully applied for Council Tax Benefit you don't have to re-apply every year."

The Department for Work and Pensions continues to work closely with local authorities to raise awareness of Council Tax Benefit in their area and encourage take-up.

Did you know

LPFA's opening hours are from 8.30am 5.00pm (although the office is manned between 8am and 6pm), Monday to Friday, and you may visit without appointment. Wheelchair access is available.

Age Concern Information Line

Provides information on issues affecting older people and their carers
0800 00 99 66.

NHS Direct

Health advice or information is available any time of the day or night **0845 46 47.**

Job seeking?

To save calling at a Jobcentre, if you need extra help looking for work, you can call 'Jobseeker Direct' on **0845 60 60 234.**

Legal Advice and Information

The Community Legal Service can provide information on issues such as debt problems, benefits, housing, immigration **0845 608 1122.**

If you have become re-employed within local government you are required to inform LPFA who will determine whether current pension payments are affected.

Pensions Schemes Registry provide a tracing service for ex-members of schemes with pension entitlements who have lost touch with previous employers: **0191 225 6393.**

Contacts

If you are a pensioner

Local rate number **0845 30 30 335** is available during normal opening hours.

Textphone: 020 7369 6119

Fax: 020 7369 6240

LPFA's e-mail address is:
enquiries@lpfa.org.uk

LPFA website

Access to your pension records is available via the LPFA's secure member website
www.lpfa.org.uk/your_fund

The Financial Services Authority

An independent body that regulates the financial services industry in the U.K.
0845 606 1234.

The Pensions Ombudsman

Can investigate and determine any complaint or dispute involving maladministration of the Scheme or matters of fact or law.
020 7834 9144.

The Occupational Pensions Advisory Service (OPAS) is available to assist members with any difficulties they cannot resolve: **020 7233 8080.**

LPFA Office 0845 30 30 335

Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغتك، يرجى الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو مراسلة العنوان أدناه

Bengali

আপনি যদি আপনার ভাষায় এই দলিলের প্রতিলিপি (কপি) চান, তা হলে নীচের ফোন নম্বরে বা ঠিকানায় অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Chinese

如果需要您母語版本的此文件，請致電以下號碼或與下列地址聯絡

Greek

Αν θέλετε να αποκτήσετε αντίγραφο του παρόντος εγγράφου στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλείστε να επικοινωνήσετε τηλεφωνικά στον αριθμό αυτό ή ταχυδρομικά στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજની નકલ તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી આપેલ નંબર ઉપર ફોન કરો અથવા નીચેના સરનામે સંપર્ક સાધો.

Hindi

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज की प्रति अपनी भाषा में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नंबर पर फोन करें अथवा नीचे दिये गये पते पर संपर्क करें

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸੰਬੰਧਤ ਕਰੋ:

Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinizde hazırlanmış bir nüshasını edinmek için, lütfen aşağıdaki telefon numarasını arayınız veya adrese başvurunuz.

Urdu

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم نیچے دئے گئے نمبر پر فون کریں یا دیئے گئے پتے پر رابطہ کریں

Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn có văn bản tài liệu này bằng ngôn ngữ của mình, hãy liên hệ theo số điện thoại hoặc địa chỉ dưới đây.

This newsletter is also available in large print and on audio cassette. It may be possible to reproduce it in other ways or in another language. Please call 0845 30 30 335.

**London Pensions Fund Authority
Dexter House
2 Royal Mint Court
LONDON
EC3N 4LP**

