



Message from the Payroll Manager

Inside this newsletter you will find a card showing the payment dates of your pension from April 2006 to March 2007. The card also explains the terms that appear on payslips and lists the pensions payroll staff here at Dexter House who are able to help you with any queries that you may have regarding your pension.

Some of you may already have noticed that my name is not included. No, this is not an error nor is it that I don't want to answer any of your calls! The reason for this is simply that I have decided to retire from work, although I still have a year or two to wait to receive my pension. My husband Malcolm retired recently and we agreed that the time was right for us to enjoy his retirement together. My last day in the office will be mid April 2006.

I have been working as LPFA's payroll manager since 1990 and before that with the GLC since September 1971. I have got to know many of you over this time and I will certainly miss the many kind letters and the general contact we have had over the years.

I shall also miss the day-to-day involvement with my team, many of who have been with me since 1990, not only endeavouring to pay your pensions accurately and on time, but also ensuring that our systems are robust and our procedures effective. I am sure my successor will, with the support of the team, continue to deliver the quality service that you have become used to.

Alison Alcock



also inside

a sad start to the year, pensions increase 2006, news and views from the fund member panel, board meetings to be opened to the public

Special announcement

It is with deep regret and much sadness that I must inform you that Phil Goodwin, our Director of Pensions Operations, passed away on 14th February following a short illness. Phil was diagnosed with inoperable cancer just two weeks previously and spent most of his final days at home and in a hospice. His family and close friends were with him to the end and he was in excellent care.

Phil had been with the LPFA since its inception in 1989 and his energy and dedication helped make LPFA the sound, successful business it is today. He strove for technical excellence and saw through a number of changes in the working processes ~ Phil was at the forefront of technological change ~ and in the operation of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

His influence went way beyond the LPFA and he was a recognised expert on the LGPS. Phil had a long and illustrious career in the pensions world and will be sadly missed by his family, and by his many friends and colleagues.

Peter Scales
Chief Executive

Pension Increase

The Government has approved the rate of increase for all public service pensions and state scheme benefits. The increase is effective from 10th April 2006 and is 2.7%.

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 10th April 2006 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.

Pensioners living abroad

Please note that with effect from April 2006 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 £3.23 to £3.30 for direct payments and from £8.44 to £8.63 for indirect payments.

If you live abroad and are paid by cheque, you may wish to consider this safer method of payment. If so, please contact LPFA for a TAPS mandate form.

The LPFA can also pay your pension quarterly, in arrears, so that the TAPS charges are reduced. For more information please call 0845 30 30 335.

Remember:

- Pensions increase is calculated on the annual pension in payment at the end of March 2006, less any Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP).
- The increase will be paid with your April pension payment.
- A payslip will be sent at the end of April showing the increase for the period 10th 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 50p.
- The increase on your GMP will be paid by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) as an addition to your State retirement pension.
- A leaflet explaining GMP in detail is available by calling 020 7369 6118.
- When you receive a new tax code from the Inland Revenue please check that the LPFA has applied the same code.
- Your P60 will be sent to you in the middle of April.
- Retain your P60, as you will need it should you be asked to complete a self assessment tax return.
- The figures provided on the P60 are the gross taxable pension and the tax deducted in the year.
- subtract the amount of tax deducted from the gross taxable pension to arrive at the net amount paid in the year.
- If you are in receipt of a 'tax exempt' injury pension 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.

Don't forget

... if you move house, or your personal circumstances change in any way that could affect your pension please write to the LPFA so that your records can be amended.



Amount of pension increase

If your pension began on or before 25th April 2005 your pension increase is 2.7%. 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
26 th April to 25 th May 2005	2.48%	26 th October to 25 th November 2005	1.13%
26 th May to 25 th June 2005	2.25%	26 th November to 25 th December 2005	0.90%
26 th June to 25 th July 2005	2.03%	26 th December to 25 th January 2006	0.68%
26 th July to 25 th August 2005	1.80%	26 th January to 25 th February 2006	0.45%
26 th August to 25 th September 2005	1.58%	26 th February to 25 th March 2006	0.23%
26 th September to 25 th October 2005	1.35%		

Tax Office

The Inland Revenue address and phone number is 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 151 210 2222. (Please note that the wrong number was shown in the Spring newsletter 2005).

Fund Member Panel Update:

There was an impressive response to the call for new Fund Member Panel members. So far LPFA has received interest from an additional 20 members and that number is still rising.

The next meeting of the Panel will take place in April 2006 so any Fund Members still interested should contact Greg Smith on 020 7369 6058.

Since publication of the Winter newsletter, a volunteer group from the Panel has met and produced articles for use in future newsletters.

The aim is to have 2 or 3 pages in each newsletter dedicated to the Fund Member Panel and the views of Fund Members. These could include articles on life after retirement, general interest or details of groups which Fund Members have organised and wish to advertise to enable other readers to attend. Whilst LPFA is unable to provide a personal contact service, it is possible to advertise organised events in these pages and encourage former colleagues to attend.

If you have an article you would like to be considered for inclusion in future LPFA's publications, please send it to The Panel, c/o Greg Smith at Dexter House, or email greg.smith@lpfa.org.uk

Articles by Panel Members

Adair Turner, head of the Pensions Commission, recently warned future generations that they will not be so well off as those recently-retired. Present-day pensioners are not only living longer than previous generations – for 200 years life-expectancy has been lengthening by roughly two weeks a decade, “like an extra 20 per cent for free”, said Tom Kirkwood, biologist and Reith lecturer – but they are enjoying healthier and more active lives. Sixteen per cent of the retired carry out some form of voluntary work, and that’s not counting looking after grandchildren.

What follows are the stories of two LPFA pensioners who found life didn't come to an end when they retired. There must be many more examples, and readers are invited to submit stories of their own, or their friends' activities for future publication.



Michael Turner

He Swapped Sides

When the ILEA was abolished in 1990, Michael Turner, then in employee relations advising others on redundancy, accepted redundancy himself. At 57, far too young to give up work altogether, he took up a two-year appointment as a Personnel Manager in the NHS.

Then, still with energy to spare, he did voluntary work, teaching adults to read and write, and three years after that he was adjudged so successful that he was offered the post he still holds: part-time course tutor in a College of Further Education, teaching citizenship among other subjects.

As it happens, citizenship is a subject Michael knows a lot about. Having been interested in local politics most of his adult life, on retirement he became an active member of his local Conservative Association and – “crossing sides”, as he says – he was adopted to fight a marginal ward.

He lost three times (but regular service in the RAF must have given him resolution), he was eventually elected to the Council and is now not only Deputy Mayor, but also serves on, amongst others, the General Purposes and Licensing Committee, which decides on applications for extended hours, and is particularly busy since the recent change in the law.

Councillor Turner particularly enjoys representing his borough as Deputy Mayor though it entails a huge additional workload, attending school speech days and all kinds of charitable events. But his most pressing concern, given that he represents a marginal ward, is the outcome of next May's borough elections. “If I don't win”, he says, pragmatically, “I'll be back to fight again, and again”. And though already 71, he still has the energy to do just that.

John Howes, Panel Member

Climb Every Mountain

When John Percival retired on the abolition of the GLC, aged 50, he had a number of tasks to do. One was to find another job, and another to complete his 'bag' of the Munros – the 284 Scottish peaks over 3,000ft. In earlier days he had climbed in the Himalayas, in Africa and in the Alps, as well as in Britain, and in 1986 only 120! of the Scottish peaks remained for him to conquer. One by one they fell to him, sometimes climbing with his three sons, sometimes with the Swiss Alpine Club, sometimes alone. In May 2005, just after his 69th birthday, the last peak on his list – Ben Lomond (3,200ft) – yielded.



John had joined the LCC in 1959 after University and national service in the RAF. At County Hall he worked in the Clerk's and Establishments departments and, finally, in ILEA. He put his experience at the disposal of Kingston Borough Council and also become clerk to the governors of a local special school, a job he continues to do, working mostly from home.

Always keen on fitness, he was a member of the Council's football club, and went on to captain the first XI on tours in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and Austria: GLC-crested plaques are still to be found in club bars all over the continent!

He lives in Worcester Park with his wife Rosemary (nee Dean), formerly of the Clerk's Department.

Voluntary Working:

Many pensioners are busier than ever - despite retiring!

However should you have some spare time and wish to participate in community projects, a good place to start would be to contact a volunteer organisation. You don't necessarily have to be a pensioner as many Members participate in voluntary activities during evenings and weekends.

The following two websites

www.csv.org.uk and

www.do-it.org.uk

explain about volunteering, and where local volunteer centres can be found.

Those of you without computers could go to your local library to find information, or telephone the Community Service Volunteers on 0207 643 1385 in order to find out what schemes are running in your area.

Ex GLC Valuation Department Staff:

An annual lunch for ex-members of the Valuation Department is held every October near Victoria Station.

Normally over 60 people attend the event but should you be interested, or know of anyone from the department who would be, please feel free to contact:

Andrew Devlin tel: 01737 353179,
e-mail andrew.develin1@ntlworld.com or
Mike Power 020 8642 6959.

If you have details of a volunteer programme or meeting group and wish to advertise it in these pages, please contact Greg Smith on 020 7369 6058 or greg.smith@lpfa.org.uk

Opening Board Meetings to the public

The Winter newsletter 2005 reported developments to strengthen member representation and feedback to the LPFA. In order to demonstrate openness and further transparency in the way the Authority conducts its affairs the LPFA Board decided at its December meeting to hold future Board meetings in public.

The next Board meeting is to be held on 30th March 2006, 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon, and will be held in the Assembly Chamber, in City Hall, the Greater London Authority's offices. Further board meetings in 2006 will be held on 29th June, 5th October and 7th December.

In making this decision the Board took into account the following:-

- LPFA is not required by law to hold meetings in public but it does have the power to do so if it so decides;
- There should be clear criteria for deciding whether agenda items are for the public or non public part of the meeting;
- The right can be reserved to exclude the public from meetings should the Chairman so decide;
- The agenda should list all items to be transacted;
- Adequate public notice of meetings should be given i.e. at least five days prior;
- The agenda and public reports should be made available for the public;
- Accommodation for the meeting should be reasonably large enough to provide seating for the public;
- Members of the public are not permitted to participate, just observe.

Copies of the agenda and public reports will be made available at the meeting but will be available for public inspection at LPFA's offices at least five days before 30th March. If you would like further information please contact Peter Harris on 020 7369 6048.

Data to help beat fraud

The Audit Commission has once again used its legal right to request personal and payroll information from the LPFA under NFI.

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 by 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.

LONDON PENSIONS FUND AUTHORITY

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how to contact us

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If you have a general enquiry
about this newsletter:

LPFA Corporate Team

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and on audio cassette.
It may be possible to
reproduce it in other ways
or in other languages

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Annual Report and Accounts
Winter Newsletter
Corporate Equality Plan
Information for New Pensioners
Guaranteed Minimum Pension
Pensioners' Charter



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LPFA cares about the environment