

The Scribe

Spring 2025

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The newsletter for Retired members of the Local Government Pension Scheme in Berkshire and their Dependants



THE ROYAL COUNTY OF
BERKSHIRE
PENSION FUND

Welcome

Welcome to the Spring edition of **The Scribe** - the newsletter for retired members of the Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund and their dependants. We hope this newsletter finds you well.

In this edition you will find the usual pension updates including confirmation of the pensions increase percentage applied from 7 April 2025 on page 3. A separate pensions increase letter will be posted to you in due course confirming the current value of your annual pension for the year ahead.

Your pay dates for 2025/2026 can be found on page 5 and why not have a go at our Spring Sudoku on page 19.

Please be aware there is a change to the way we issue payslips from April 2025 so more information can be found on page 6.

We hope you find this newsletter informative. If you have any questions about your Berkshire pension please do not hesitate to contact us.

Simon Bond

Councillor Simon Bond, Chairman, Berkshire Pension Fund Committee and Berkshire Pension Fund Advisory Panel

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Local Government
Pension Scheme

Pensions Increase 2025

Your Berkshire pension is increased annually in line with the Pensions Increase Order which is currently linked to the Consumer Prices Index (CPI).

The increase is measured by the September to September adjustment in the CPI and is applied to your pension from the following April.

The 2025 increase is **1.7%** and is effective from **Monday 7 April 2025**.

| Effective Date | Percentage Increase |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 7 April 2025 | 1.7% |
| 8 April 2024 | 6.7% |
| 10 April 2023 | 10.1% |
| 11 April 2022 | 3.1% |
| 12 April 2021 | 0.5% |
| 6 April 2020 | 1.7% |
| 8 April 2019 | 2.4% |
| 9 April 2018 | 3% |
| 10 April 2017 | 1% |

If your pension began **before 23 April 2024** you will receive the full 1.7% increase. If your pension began on or **after 23 April 2024**, you will receive a proportionate increase in line with the table below:

| Pensions commencing before 23 April 2024 | | 1.7% |
|--|-------------------|-------|
| 23 April 2024 | 22 May 2024 | 1.56% |
| 23 May 2024 | 22 June 2024 | 1.42% |
| 23 June 2024 | 22 July 2024 | 1.28% |
| 23 July 2024 | 22 August 2024 | 1.13% |
| 23 August 2024 | 22 September 2024 | 0.99% |
| 23 September 2024 | 22 October 2024 | 0.85% |
| 23 October 2024 | 22 November 2024 | 0.71% |
| 23 November 2024 | 22 December 2024 | 0.57% |
| 23 December 2024 | 22 January 2025 | 0.43% |
| 23 January 2025 | 22 February 2025 | 0.28% |
| 23 February 2025 | 22 March 2025 | 0.14% |



Pensions Increase 2025

Pensions Increase letter 2025

Your personalised 2025 pensions increase letter will be sent under separate cover to your home address.

If your pension commenced **after 22 March 2025** you will not be due an increase to your pension this year, however your pension will increase in line with CPI from April 2026.

Historical pensions increase letters

Since 2015 we have not uploaded your individual pensions increase information to your online account. If you require a statement of earnings for financial reasons please contact the pension payroll team who will be happy to assist.

A note about Guaranteed Minimum Pension(GMP)

If your pension includes a pre-6 April 1988 element of GMP any increase due on this part of your pension will be paid by the State. If your pension includes a post-5 April 1988 element of GMP the Pension Fund will pay an increase of up to 1.7% on this element for 2025. Any pre-6 April 1988 GMP value and post 5-April 1988 GMP value will be deducted from the total annual pension the Fund pays to you before the increase is applied.

Chancellor announces reforms to LGPS

You may have seen a lot in the news recently about the launch of a consultation following the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Mansion House Speech in November.

The consultation – **LGPS: Fit for the Future**, sets out the Government's aspirations for the LGPS regarding investment pools, local investment and Fund governance.

Please be reassured that there are no implications for your pension benefits. LGPS benefits are set out in statute and are paid out to you regardless of how the Fund's investments are managed.



Pension Pay Dates 2025/2026

Your Berkshire Pension is paid into your chosen bank or building society account on the last working day of the month. We have detailed below your pension payment dates for the next 12 months for your convenience.

| 2025 |
|----------------------------|
| Wednesday 30 April 2025 |
| Friday 30 May 2025 |
| Monday 30 June 2025 |
| Thursday 31 July 2025 |
| Friday 29 August 2025 |
| Tuesday 30 September 2025 |
| Friday 31 October 2025 |
| Friday 28 November 2025 |
| Wednesday 31 December 2025 |
| 2026 |
| Friday 30 January 2026 |
| Friday 27 February 2026 |
| Tuesday 31 March 2026 |

Please note these pay dates apply to UK bank accounts only.

If you have your pension paid into an overseas bank account it may arrive a few days after the pay date quoted opposite.



December Pay Day

In previous years we paid your pension slightly earlier in December, however since 2024 your December payment is made to your account on the last working day of the month in line with the rest of the year.

Your December 2025 payment date will be **31 December 2025.**

Pension Payslips

As you will be aware historically we have posted a payslip to you if your monthly net pension payment has changed by more than £1 from the previous month.

With effect from April 2025 we will no longer produce printed payslips. However we will continue to upload your payslips on a monthly basis to your online account. Your online payslip will show you your date of payment, the tax code applied to your pension and the monthly Gross and Net pension values.

You will continue to receive your net monthly pension income from us on the last working day of the month as confirmed on page 5.

**...from
your online
dashboard
select 'Payslip'
from the
'Payroll' box.**

Payroll

View your payslips and P60s.

- P60 End of Year Certificate
- Payslip

...from here you can select your current and previous payment dates and view your payslip information. An example of your online payslip is shown below:

Payslip

Date of Payment DD/MM/YYYY

Tax Code

Gross Pension £

Tax £

Other Deductions £

Net Pension £

Visit www.berkshirerepensions.org.uk
and click on the '**my pension
ONLINE**' link to login.



P60 2025

Your P60 for the tax year 2024/2025 will be issued in advance of the HMRC deadline of 31 May 2025. We hope to post your P60 to you in April.

Your P60 information is available to view on your online account where you can also access P60 details from previous years.

Please keep your P60 in a safe place for future reference.

From 2026 we do not intend to issue a hard copy of your P60, however the P60 information will be available on your online account in the usual way.

In the future if you would like a hard copy of your P60 information you can contact us and we can provide you with a Statement of Earnings letter.

Valuation Year



Every three years the Berkshire Pension Fund is required to appoint an independent actuary to carry out a valuation of the Fund.

The valuation is a health check to see if the Fund's assets are sufficient to meet its liabilities. It is carried out by the actuary to the Fund, Barnett Waddingham.

Employer contribution rates for the forthcoming three year period (**1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029**) are set as part of the valuation process which takes place in April 2025.

Once the valuation has been completed the full report will be published on our website.

The McCloud Remedy - *update*

As reported in previous editions of *The Scribe*, when the Government reformed public service pension schemes in 2014 and 2015, older members were protected from the changes.

In December 2018, the Courts ruled that younger members of the judges' and firefighters' pension schemes had been discriminated against because the protections did not apply to them.

The rules of all public service pension schemes, including the LGPS, changed from 1 October 2023 because of the ruling - the changes are known as the '**McCloud Remedy**'.

The pension team has run a report to identify how many of our scheme members may be in scope for the remedy.

If you qualify for underpin protection we will calculate if an additional amount of pension benefit is due to be paid to you.

If a rectification is needed to your pension payment you will hear from us by 31 August 2026.

We appreciate your patience during this time as we work through these changes.

Where can I find out more?

Further information on the McCloud Judgement and the McCloud Remedy can be found by visiting the McCloud section of the LGPS member website:

<https://www.lgpsmember.org/mccloud-remedy/>



Do you have a query about your tax?

If there is a change to your tax code the tax office will issue an electronic notification to our payroll team confirming details of the change.

If you wish to query your tax code you must contact the tax office directly. When contacting HMRC please quote the tax reference for the Berkshire Pension Fund - **070/R5200**.

Telephone (UK): 0300 200 3300

Check your tax account online:

www.gov.uk/personal-tax-account

2025/2026 tax-free personal allowance

Most people in the UK get a personal allowance of tax-free income. This is the amount of income you can receive before you pay tax. The standard personal allowance from **6 April 2025 to 5 April 2026** remains at **£12,570**.

Please note - if you live in Scotland you will have the same personal allowance for 2025/2026 as previously quoted (£12,570), but your tax bandwidths will be different. HMRC will determine if you are a Scottish tax payer.

Online Services available from HMRC

Did you know HMRC offer a range of online and App services that can help boost and manage your finances?

For example, where money can be claimed back, it's free to claim directly through HMRC's online services and is the only way to guarantee receiving 100% of the repayment.

The HMRC app and online services can help you:

1. **Claim money back on work expenses**
2. **Claim and manage Child Benefit**
3. **Claim a tax refund**
4. **Claim Marriage Allowance**

To find out more about how to download the HMRC App please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/download-the-hmrc-app>



Responsible Investment update...

Dear Member

As always, the Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund (the Fund) continues to work with its pooled investment manager, Local Pensions Partnership Investments Limited (LPPI), to manage its diverse investment portfolio, embedding responsible investment (RI) principles in its investment strategy.

The Fund's Responsible Investment Strategy was last approved by the Berkshire Pension Fund Committee in September 2022. At its meeting in March 2025, the Committee agreed to form a Task and Finish Group to review and update that policy, ensuring that the stated values, beliefs and priorities remain current, and considering any new areas for priority focus for the future.

The Task and Finish Group, comprising members for the Berkshire Pension Fund Committee, the Pensions Advisory Panel and the Local Pension Board, will be supported by Fund Officers, the Fund's independent advisers and LPPI in assessing

what are the key responsible investment priorities for the Fund. The group can then assess what actions the Fund needs to take to ensure those priorities are reflected in the Fund's investment portfolio and in the future reporting from LPPI.

The Task and Finish Group will meet in April and May 2025, with a view to presenting an updated Responsible Investment Policy to the Pension Fund Committee in September 2025 for adoption. We hope to carry out some member engagement with the revised policy over the course of the next few months.

At each of its meetings, the Committee receives a report from LPPI, outlining the key Responsible Investment activities and outcomes over the previous quarter.

These reports are published on the fund's website, along with reports from the Fund's engagement partner, Robeco, on their engagement with the companies in which the Fund is invested.

...Spring 2025

As the Fund's investments are all managed by LPPI, we rely on their Responsible Investment processes and due diligence to support our continued improvements in this area. To that end, it is pleasing to report that LPPI has successfully retained its signatory status for the UK Stewardship Code for the fourth year in a row.

You can read about the engagement activities undertaken on behalf of all three funds within the LPPI pool in the LPPI Responsible Investment and Stewardship Annual Report 2023-24:

<https://www.localpensionspartnership.org.uk/Investment-management/Responsible-investment/Responsible-Investment-reports-and-policies>

Please contact us if you have any questions on any matters raised in this article.

Jo Thistlewood

**Jo Thistlewood CPFA, ACA
Head of Pension Fund**

The Fund's Responsible Investment strategy and reports can be found on our website:

<https://www.berkshirepensions.org.uk/investments/responsible-investment>



Tracing lost pensions

Do you have pensions you have lost contact with over the years? If so why not use the **'Find pension contact details'** service.

The service is free and helps reunite people with their lost pensions, giving details of providers to help people track them down.

You can trace contact details for lost pensions by using the online portal:
www.gov.uk/find-pension-contact-details or over the telephone - **0800 731 0193**

Please note - you will need the name of an employer or a pension provider to use this service.

Do you have pensions with other LGPS Funds?
If you have previous LGPS pensions you have lost touch with you can find contact details of all 86 LGPS Funds in England and Wales by visiting the LGPS member website:
<https://www.lgpsmember.org/contact-your-fund/>

Preparing for pensions dashboards

The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) is introducing **Pensions Dashboards** to the UK to enable you to access your pension information online, securely and all in one place.

Dashboards will provide clear and simple information about multiple pension savings, including LGPS and State Pension.

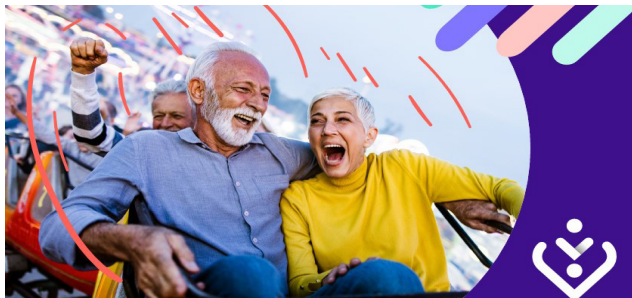
Like all other public sector pension schemes, the LGPS must be connected with the Pensions Dashboards by 31 October 2025 and able to go LIVE no later than October 2026. We will let you know when you can login to the Live portal.



Spend more time doing what you love

Your time is precious. Whether that's spent on hobbies, staying active, relaxing or creating lasting memories with loved ones.

As a retiree you've got all the time in the world to spend doing whatever you love. But, are you making the most of your free time, doing all the things you promised yourself when planning your retirement?



Maximise your free time with CSSC

CSSC is a not-for-profit, health and wellbeing, membership organisation, providing discounted days out, sports, wellbeing and exclusive savings to over 130,000 retired and serving members of the civil service, public sector and their families.

Among the 4,000+ benefits and savings their members enjoy:

- **FREE** year-round family entry with up to 6 kids, to **all English Heritage** and **Cadw sites**.
- **FREE** unlimited entry to **Kew Gardens** and **Wakehurst sites**.
- Saving up to **33% off gym memberships** at over **3,000 gyms, spas** and **leisure centres**.
- **Huge discounts** off family days out to theme parks, cinemas and zoos.
- Up to **10% cashback** at thousands of popular online and high street retailers.
- Over **40 different sports clubs** and **communities** to join and connect with.
- Join our **free Active Wellbeing challenges** in **February, May and September** – to stay active.

On average CSSC members save over £300 a year doing more of the things they love, with the people they love.

What does being active mean to you?

For some it's keeping the garden tidy, training for a marathon or teaching the grandchildren to ride their bike.

For others it's interrailing across Europe, going back to school or volunteering at their local hospice.

However you like to stay active, CSSC can help you grow your passions and find your community of like-minded people.

Join thousands of retired members in their active communities, for loads of opportunities to play sport, volunteer, learn new skills and explore the world.

How can you join?

As a former or current member of the civil service or public sector, you are eligible to join CSSC and make use of their exclusive benefits, perks and savings.

If you're retired or drawing a pension you benefit from a discounted monthly fee of just **£4.49/month**, which you can pay by monthly Direct Debit or one simple annual payment of £53.88. That's less than 15p a day to save hundreds of pounds a year.

Join CSSC today at

www.cssc.site/berkshirepensionfund

or scan the QR code below:



Change of address notification

Please complete the form below with your new address details:

Your personal details

Surname

Effective date of change

Forenames

Email

National Insurance no.

Mobile tel no.

Pension no.

Landline tel no.

Old address

Your signature

Postcode

Date

New address

Postcode

Please ensure you have signed and dated this form before returning it to **Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund, Zone C, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1RF**



Change of bank details notification

If you would like to notify us of a change in bank details please complete the form below. For security reasons, we are unable to accept notifications of bank changes over the telephone or by email.

Your personal details

Surname

Forenames

NI no. or Pension no.

Landline tel no.

Mobile tel no.

Email

Effective date of change

Building society reference no. (if applicable)

Your signature

Date

New bank details (UK accounts only)

Account name

Sort code (6 digits)

Account no. (8 digits)

Please ensure you have signed and dated this form before returning it to the **Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund, Zone C, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1RF**



Online Access

'my pension ONLINE' is an internet based application which enables you to securely access and update your own pension details online via the Berkshire Pension Fund website from the comfort of your own home or workplace using a desktop PC, laptop, smartphone or tablet.



As a *Retired* or *Dependant* member of the scheme you can:

- **update your home address**
- **check your personal details**
- **view your P60 information**
- **view your pension payment history**
- **access all publications**

To register for 'my pension ONLINE' or to log in to your existing account please visit:

www.berkshirerpensions.org.uk

New and improved self service platform for members.

Our software provider is launching a new self-service portal – '**Engage**'

'Engage' will offer an improved user experience and introduce new features such as interactive personalised annual benefit statements.

Look out for more details coming soon...



Useful contacts

Updated website...

You may have noticed a change to the look of our website. We launched our new-look Berkshire Pension Fund website on 31 July.

If you have any links bookmarked or saved in your browser favourites you will need to re-link these pages accordingly.

Visit www.berkshirepensions.org.uk

...and address

As a reminder the Berkshire Pension Fund relocated in June last year to Maidenhead Town Hall.

Our new postal address is:

**Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund
Zone C, Town Hall
St Ives Road
Maidenhead
SL6 1RF**



Dedicated pension payroll helpline number for queries

We have a dedicated helpline number for payroll queries - 01628 796 670. You can use this number to contact us about...

- Changes to your monthly pension payment
- Queries relating to Pensions Increase
- Tax Queries
- Reporting the death of anyone receiving a pension from the Fund

You can also email your payroll queries to info@berkshirepensions.org.uk



Spring Sudoku

In our Autumn 2024 edition of *The Scribe* we invited our readers to try our word search competition. Thank you to everyone who entered.

For another chance to win a £25 high street gift card, why not have a go at our Spring Sudoku competition?

Please send your entry to **Joanne Brazier, Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund, Zone C, Town Hall, St. Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF** or email communications@berkshirerpensions.org.uk to reach us by **31 July 2025**. The winner will be drawn at random from the entries received. Good luck!

Please note this competition is not open to members of the Pension Fund team.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Name | |
| Address | |
| | |
| Postcode | |
| Tel. number | |

Fill in the squares in the grid, so that each row, each column and each 3 x 3 contains all the digits from 1 - 9.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | 6 | | | | | |
| | 4 | 7 | | 1 | 8 | | 9 | |
| | 8 | 6 | | | 4 | 3 | | 2 |
| 8 | 2 | 9 | | | 7 | 5 | | |
| 6 | | | 9 | | | | | |
| | | 5 | | | 3 | | | |
| | | 4 | 7 | | 5 | | 3 | 6 |
| 5 | | | | 9 | 1 | 4 | | 7 |
| | 3 | | | 2 | | | | 8 |

Contact us



Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund

Zone C, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead,
Berkshire, SL6 1RF

Pension Helpdesk

01628 796 668

Payroll Contact Number

01628 796 670

lines are open Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

Email: info@berkshirepensions.org.uk

Website: www.berkshirepensions.org.uk

Did you know you can opt out of receiving a paper copy of this newsletter? Simply email communications@berkshirepensions.org.uk confirming your name and pension payroll reference. You will still be able to access our newsletters through 'my pension ONLINE' and the Berkshire Pension Fund website.

If you would like this newsletter in large print or audio please contact us on 01628 796754 or e-mail info@berkshirepensions.org.uk

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is the administering authority to the Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund

www.rbwm.gov.uk



Royal Borough
of Windsor &
Maidenhead