



## News from the Environment Agency Pension Fund

### 1. Welcome

Welcome to the summer edition of your contributing member pension newsletter.

This gives you important news and updates about your pension fund, including our latest annual report and financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2021. Our 'Pension basics' section covers pension topics such as what your annual pension statement means, and what happens when you begin the process to retire.

**[If you'd like to download our newsletter, you'll find a PDF version in our Newsletters section on our website.](#)**

**[If you have any feedback about the communications we send you, please email us at Engage@eapf.org.uk](mailto:Engage@eapf.org.uk)**

### 2. Investments

#### **Our Pension Fund Annual Report and Financial Statements 2020/21**

Our 2020/21 annual report and financial statements are now complete and have been laid in parliament ahead of the summer recess. In a year of a global pandemic, the Fund's had some amazing achievements, outperforming previous years! Something to be really proud of considering some of the turmoil in the investment market.

There is a real recognition that Responsible Investment funds have outperformed during the market turmoil which have helped protect our Fund value.



[Read more about how we performed in 2020/21](#)

### **The EAPF goes net zero! You spoke, we listened...**

Not many other funds out there have asked their members what they think about Responsible Investments, but we did. 92% of our members who took part in our Responsible Investment Forum last year told us that they thought it was important that our Fund had a net zero target. And our Pensions Committee agrees.

The Fund has now agreed a target of getting to net zero by 2045. And whilst 2045 seems a long way off, the target is backed by a science-based plan using data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), with interim targets to ensure it's on track.

We're already ahead of the game - nearly 5 years ahead of target in terms of emission reductions to reach the 2045 goal.

[See more on EAPF reducing emissions](#)

## **3. Online services**

### **Better site, better experience at [www.eapf.org.uk](http://www.eapf.org.uk)**

We've listened to your feedback and worked hard to create a better online experience for you.

We've made our website more accessible, improved the layout and made it easier for you to find the information you need.

Our new 'Resources' section gives you access to our latest member newsletters, publications and forms all in one dedicated place, helping you stay up to date with the Scheme.

You'll also find handy webinars and videos, including our 'Pensions made simple' series, to show you everything you'll need to know about your pension. [Visit our new Resources hub](#).

Our 'I'm a contributing member' section is a great place to learn how the Scheme works and helps guide you through your pension life whether you're new to the Scheme or approaching retirement. [Visit our Contributing member section](#).

Whatever you need, help is only a click away.

[If you have any feedback about our new website, please email us at Engage@eapf.org.uk](#)



[Visit our new website at www.eapf.org.uk](http://www.eapf.org.uk)

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## Future of EAPF Online

We're continuing to work hard to develop and improve our EAPF Online portal for all our members.

The portal is currently going through a migration upgrade which means there are ongoing developments this year to improve accessibility, functionality, and overall user experience of EAPF Online.

By upgrading, it also means we'll be able to offer our members more online transactions in the future. We'll also be working on developments such as making the login process easier for our users and an exciting future development to upgrade your member mailbox within the portal.

We're always looking to make continued improvements and so your feedback is important to us. We'll use the feedback gathered to inform any future changes.

[If you have any feedback about EAPF Online, please email us at Engage@eapf.org.uk](#)

[Login or register to EAPF Online](#)

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## Helpful tips when using EAPF Online

By using feedback from our members, we've provided some helpful tips below to ensure you get the best experience of our EAPF Online portal.

- Passwords are case sensitive so make sure you type in your login details exactly how they're shown.
- Using memorised passwords or pins in your browser when logging in may cause issues if you've reset or changed login details but haven't updated your browser passwords.
- You can't register the same email address to more than one EAPF Online account.
- Using Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge will give you the best experience of EAPF Online.
- After a password reset, when the system asks you to enter your 'old password and pin', you need to enter the temporary details provided by Capita.
- To exit the portal, you must always click 'Log out' before closing your browser. If you don't exit properly, you'll still be logged in and will be asked to reset your details again for security purposes.

## 4. Pension news

### Important message about Prudential

If you have additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) with Prudential, please be aware that they're currently experiencing some significant delays in their service offering. This affects existing and new potential members. The problems came to light when Prudential upgraded to a new administration platform.

They're working through their backlog, but please be aware that currently - payment of your retirement benefits may be delayed by as much as two months.

**[Many questions can be answered by visiting the Prudential website and portal.](#)**

One other issue is that payment information isn't showing on online accounts as quickly as it should. Whilst this isn't ideal, and it may feel unsettling to not see your payments online. If your payslip shows the payment has gone to Prudential, then they will catch up, so there is no need to phone to check. If you do need to phone them, you can call Prudential on 0345 600 0343. Please be prepared for a long wait to get through when calling.



[Read more about Prudential delays](#)

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## McCloud update

McCloud is commonly used to refer to the court judgment which ruled that the protection given to older members of the public service pension schemes, when they reformed to CARE Schemes, was discriminatory.

For the LGPS, the discrimination related to the underpinning of the pension a member would receive for pensionable service during the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2022, as this protection was only applied to members who, on 31 March 2012, were within 10 years of reaching their 65th birthday. Members who benefited from this protection would, on their retirement, receive the higher of their CARE pension or the pension they would have received if the LGPS had continued to be a final salary scheme; this protection is referred to as the statutory underpin.

The government now proposes to extend the statutory underpin to all members who were previously excluded because they were more than 10 years away from reaching their 65th birthday. However, while the government has held a consultation on the proposed extension of the statutory underpin and the regulations that will govern this protection, it is unlikely that many members will see a change to their LGPS benefits.

[Find out more about McCloud](#)

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## New contribution bands from 1 April 2021

The amount of contributions you pay into your pension is based on how much you're paid.

The contributions table is reviewed every

## Public Sector Exit Payment Reform

Many years ago, we were told the Government wanted to end six figure payments to public sector workers when they left their employment. This planned reform to cap public sector exit

April to make sure your pay stays in line with inflation.

This year saw an 0.5% increase to the table.

Check out our 'Paying into the Scheme' page on our website to see which band applies to you.



[Find out more](#)

payments wouldn't come into force before 1 October 2016.

After a very slow start, the expected reforms were quickly consulted on and a cap on public sector exit payments came into force 4 November 2020. But by 25 February 2021, legislation had been made and laid before parliament to revoke the cap with the revocation coming into force on 19 March 2021.



[Find out more](#)

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## Annual pension statements

Our latest annual pension statements will be available to our contributing members by 31 August 2021.

Your statement will show the pension benefits that you've built up in the EAPF up to 31 March 2021 and a forward projection to your normal pension age (NPA). Your statement also reminds you about whether you've nominated beneficiaries and how your benefits compare against pension tax limits.

We'll send you an email to let you know when your statement is ready to view on EAPF Online. You'll no longer receive a contributing member paper statement from EAPF unless you told us in writing before 1 July 2021 that you want to keep receiving a paper statement. If you wrote to us after 30 June 2021 you might not receive a paper statement this year, but you'll receive a paper statement next year.

**[To access your statement in EAPF Online, simply click on your 'Mailbox' when logged into the portal](#)** and then click on the PDF icon to open your annual pension statement.

**[If you haven't registered for an EAPF Online account, see our 'Your pension online' page for details on how to register.](#)**





## Tax allowances

### Lifetime allowance

The lifetime allowance (LTA) for the 2021/22 tax year remains at £1,073,100, and in the Budget it was confirmed that the LTA was to be frozen at £1,073,100 until April 2026.

The LTA is a limit on the amount of pension savings that can be built up in pension schemes without triggering a tax charge when you take your pension.

### Annual allowance

Annual allowance (AA) is set by the Treasury and is currently £40,000. The AA is the amount by which the value of your pension savings may increase in any one year without you having to pay an excess tax charge. Your personal AA may be less than £40,000 if your taxable income exceeds HMRC limits or you've accessed flexible benefits.

[Read our Tax Controls factsheet](#)

## 5. Pension basics



### I want to understand my annual pension statement

Every year, by 31 August we'll provide



### What happens when I start the process for retiring?

Retiring isn't something you do very

your annual pension statement which you can access through your EAPF Online account.

Your statement is a good starting point to help you understand the benefits you could potentially receive in your retirement.

You can also delve deeper and use our retirement illustrator tool to see how much you could receive at different retirement ages.

often and can be a daunting prospect when it comes to making sure you've got your ducks in a row!

We've provided some useful steps to you get started.

Here we'll cover which online tools you should use to find the right retirement date, and how you start the application.

[Find out more](#)

[Find out more](#)

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## How divorce could affect your pension

When a marriage breaks down, the family wealth (known as 'matrimonial assets') is shared between the separating parties. Matrimonial assets include things like the equity you may have in the family home or money in the bank, but it also includes the value of the pension you've built up.

Since 1 July 1996, divorcing couples could agree to share their pension when dividing up their matrimonial assets. Initially this was done by something called an 'earmarking order' which ringfenced a part of the pension and/or lump sum you'd receive when you retire enabling this earmarked portion to be paid to your former spouse.

But with this provision, the former spouse won't have access to their portion of your pension until you take your retirement benefits. It would also stop when you die – meaning it didn't provide a clean break solution.

Since 1 December 2000, it's been possible to break up a pension by using a 'pension sharing order'. Pension sharing orders result in a part of your pension being given to your former spouse, so they have their own pension pot which is separate and independent from yours.

[See more about pensions on divorce](#)



## 6. Communications

### Contributing member webinars 2021

We'll again be running our contributing member pension webinars throughout October and November to show you the benefits of being in the Scheme.

Our webinars can help all types of members whether you've been in the Scheme for years or a few months, we'll cover the choices you can make now, helping you plan and save for your retirement.

We'll host morning and afternoon sessions, so you can choose whichever webinar suits you. If you're unable to attend, don't worry you can also watch or download our presentations from our website towards the end of November.

We had a massive increase in interest for these webinars last year, so make sure you book your session as soon as we open the registration form! We'll keep you updated on when this will be. Click below for more info about the various sessions that will be available.

[See more about our webinars](#)

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### Pension Awareness Week


Keep an eye out for our Pension Awareness communications throughout Pension Awareness Week between 20 and 24 September this year.

We'll be communicating with you through a series of emails covering important topics as well as some interesting case studies.

 [www.eapf.org.uk](http://www.eapf.org.uk)

 [info@eapf.org.uk](mailto:info@eapf.org.uk)

 0800 121 6593

 +44 114 452 5008 (Overseas)

 @EAPensionfund

**Environment Agency  
Pension Fund**