

Environment Agency Pension Fund

Your Pension

April 2017



News from the Environment Agency Pension Fund

1. Welcome

Welcome to your first E Bulletin – a fully digital version of Your Pension newsletter, which we hope you'll find as informative and easy to access as previous printed versions. We'll be increasing our digital communications over the coming months, enhancing our service to you, and at the same time significantly reducing our print and postage costs and thereby improving our carbon footprint.

This edition covers interesting topics such as our latest pension news, important updates on work we've done for the Fund's Triennial Valuation, investment asset pooling and much more.

[Read our 'Chairman's Welcome'](#)

2. Pension News

Pensions continue to hit the headlines, so we'll always keep you informed of any pension changes that could affect you as a member of the Environment Agency Pension Fund (EAPF).

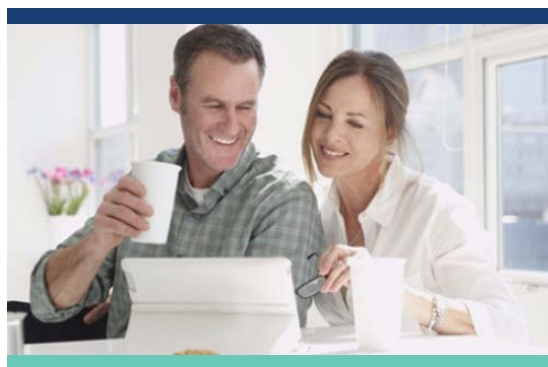
Good news from our 2016 actuarial valuation

Every three years, our Fund undertakes a valuation in conjunction with our Scheme Actuary. This year's valuation results were announced in March.



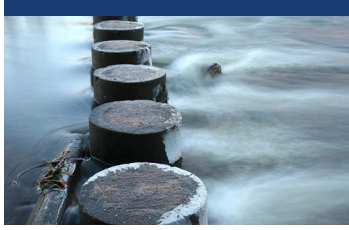
Annual Pension Statement

Your pension statement was sent to your home address over the Christmas period and can be viewed on EAPF Online for those members who've registered for the service.



[Find out more](#)

[Find out more](#)

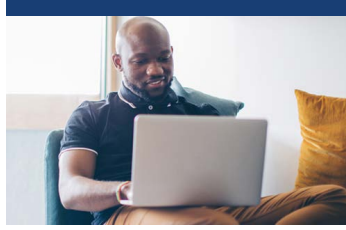


Changing factors for late retirements

The Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) has published new actuarial guidance on late retirement including new increase factors on 4 October 2016.

This guidance came into effect on 4 January 2017.

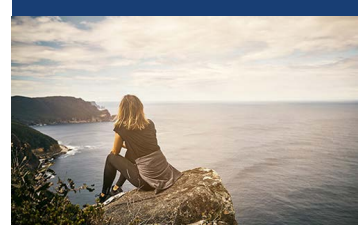
[Find out more](#)



Public sector exit payment

In our last newsletter, we referred to the Government's intention to introduce a cap on the exit payments made to employees of public sector bodies when they leave employment.

The Government will issue a consultation on the regulations that will govern the new exit scheme payment arrangements in 2017, ahead of them making any changes.



Prudential AVC exit charges

Prudential have announced that their policy on exit charges has changed with effect from 19 March 2017.

Members whose first contribution is received on, or after 19 March 2017 will no longer be subject to an exit charge regardless of age.

[Find out more](#)

Introducing our 85 year rule click tool

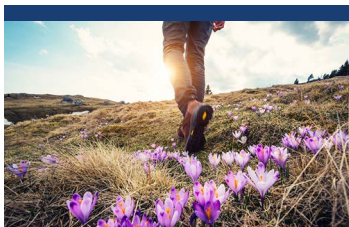
If you joined the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) before 1 October 2006 and meet certain criteria at retirement, some of your pension may be protected from a reduction under the '85 year rule'. Use our 'eligibility checker tool' to see if you're protected.

[Use this tool](#)

Supreme Court ruling on co-habiting partners

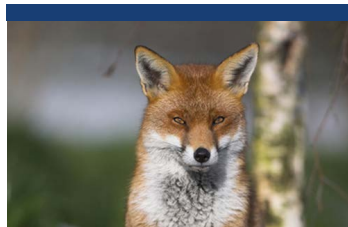
You may have seen in the press that the Supreme Court have ruled on a case in Northern Ireland regarding the non-payment of a pension to a potential beneficiary, due to the lack of an Expression of Wish form, nominating a beneficiary.

[Find out more](#)



Annual Allowance

The annual allowance limit is designed to cap the amount your pension savings can grow from year to year without incurring a tax charge, remains at £40,000 for 2016/17 but has



Tapered Allowance

From 2016/17, anyone earning over £150,000 of 'adjusted income' will see their annual allowance tax relief reduced, with a £1 reduction for every £2 of 'adjusted income' earned over £150,000.

Applying for protection

The lifetime allowance was reduced from £1.25 million to £1 million on 6 April 2016. For those with pension savings worth more than £1 million on 5 April 2016 there are a number of transitional

undergone changes since last April.

[Find out more](#)

protections available.

[Find out more](#)

[Find out more](#)

State Pension Age

The state pension age (SPA) is now reviewed every 5 years. The first review has been completed and has made its recommendations to Government. The SPA is currently 65 for men, and gradually increasing for women from 60 to 65.



[Find out more](#)

Your new State pension

The Government introduced a new single tier State pension from 6 April 2016. This means anyone reaching state pension age after 5 April 2016 will receive the new state pension. Certain protections exist for people who contributed to a contracted out pension scheme (like the LGPS) before 6 April 2016.

[Find out more](#)

State pension shortfall?

To work out whether you have a shortfall, the first thing you need to do is request a Pension Forecast from the [Future Pensions Centre](#).

This will include a Contracted-Out Pension Equivalent (COPE) amount.



[Find out more](#)

Topping up your State pension

You can choose to top up any shortfall in your State pension.

For more information on this option, please see the [Royal London Topping up your State Pension Guide](#).



[Find out more](#)

3. How we Invest

Pooling our Pension Investments

In our last newsletter we highlighted that the Government has introduced regulations that require Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Funds to pool investments to improve efficiency.

We've collaborated with other South West funds for many years and it was natural to start looking at pooling our investments together.

Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire have recently also joined this proposed pool of 10 Funds, which is called the 'Brunel Pension Partnership'.

The Pensions Committee and Environment Agency Board will be monitoring the progress of the pooling proposals through the spring of 2017, before a final decision is taken on entry into the Brunel Pension Partnership.

[Find out more](#)



Responsible Investment

We remain passionate about investing the Fund's assets responsibly and we fully embrace the need to deliver a truly sustainable pension Fund that delivers financially to meet the objectives of our employers and members.

Tackling climate risk

We've published a Policy to Address the Impacts of Climate Change to demonstrate to our members we have a credible plan to deliver strong long term financial returns as the impacts of climate change materialise.

[Find out more](#)

External benchmarking

We (and all the investment managers we use) are signatories of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI).

We're assessed annually by the PRI on our responsible investment activities and we've recently achieved the highest possible score of A*.

[Find out more](#)

Acting as good owners

As investors we own a portion of the companies in which we invest.

Acting as good owners we can use our rights to try and encourage more companies to act responsibly and to achieve continual improvement within their practices.

[Find out more](#)

Climate change initiatives

We are currently working on investing and promoting an orderly transition to a low carbon economy, and in January this year we launched an initiative co-led by ourselves and the Church of England Pension Fund, called the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI).

[Find out more](#)

4. Changing the way we communicate

Based on your feedback, we're changing the way we communicate with you, which means we're going digital. If you've given us your email address, you may have already started to receive email communications. We're going to be in touch more frequently, highlighting key elements of your pension benefits and addressing important pension topics. By signing up you'll get access to the latest news and updates - making sure you're always in the know.

For more information contact us at: eapf@environment-agency.gov.uk

Pension Webinars

Throughout October and November last year we ran a number of pension webinars to help explain the benefits of being a member of the Scheme. We surveyed everyone who attended and received some extremely positive results.

[See how you rated us](#)

Sign up for an online account

From our home page simply:

- Click 'Log in to your pension'
- Click 'Register'
- Enter the 'security code' shown
- Enter your personal details

[Sign up online](#)

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