



Gwent Pension News

Newsletter for Active and Deferred Members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) with the Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund

Welcome from the Pensions Manager

Welcome to the summer 2020 edition of Gwent Pensions News, our newsletter to update you on the latest news about the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and other topical pension matters.

This edition covers accessing your 2019/20 annual benefit statement, an update on member services during coronavirus and an update on the McCloud judgement. It also includes some more updates in the short news section.

Best Wishes

Jo Griffiths

Joanne Griffiths
Pensions Manager



Your 2019/20 Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Pension Statement

Your Pension Statement for 2019/20 is now available on your **My Pension Online** account.

If you have not yet signed up to see your My Pension Online account – visit our website www.gwentpensionfund.co.uk and click on the link My Pension Online at the top of the screen. There are then 3 simple steps to sign up to My Pension Online:

Step 1 – Type in your **National Insurance Number** and **Post Code**.

Step 2 – Chose a **Username** and a **Password** for your online pension account.

Step 3 – Answer some **security questions**.

We will send you a pin number in the post to complete your registration

How to see your 2019/20 Pension Statement – when you have logged into your My Pension Online account, click on **Documents and Statements** in the menu on the left. Your 2019/20 Pension Statement is in **Benefit Statement Summary**. Click on the '+' sign to open it.

You can download our guide to understanding your benefit statement from our website at www.gwentpensionfund.co.uk under the Forms and Publications section—guides

My Pension Online

Have you signed up to see your own pension account?

To sign up go to our website www.gwentpensionfund.co.uk and click on My Pension Online (at the top of the screen)



Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

OPEN

Member Services

Unfortunately, due to the situation with Coronavirus the Pension Fund Office is closed and all staff have been working remotely since the beginning of April.

We are providing as full a range of services to our members as possible. However, there may be some delays in responding to your queries or requests but rest assured a member of the team will respond to you as soon as they can.

We would like to thank all our members for their understanding and patience during this time.

Service Changes

- We can no longer offer face-to-face appointments at the current time.
- If possible email your queries and documents to us at pensions@torfaen.gov.uk, or send your correspondence securely through your My Pension Online account.
- **If have to send documents or correspondence in the post, please do not send us original certificates or documents unless we ask you to do so.**

We will continue to keep members updated of any service changes on our website www.gwentpensionfund.co.uk.

Coronavirus (Covid-19) is affecting the stock market, does this mean I'll get less pension when I retire?

The LGPS is a defined benefit pension scheme, so your main scheme benefits are not linked to stock market performance and are instead worked out based on your pensionable pay and number of years as a member.



You can be assured that your main scheme benefits will be unaffected by any stock market movements.

However, any in-house Additional Voluntary Contribution (AVC) plan you have is a defined contribution arrangement; in which case the value of your chosen investment fund will be linked to performance of the stock market and may be affected.

Coronavirus FAQ for LGPS Members

The Local Government Association (LGA) published answers to some of the Frequently asked member questions about their pension during Coronavirus.

Click on service and information updates at www.gwentpensionfund.co.uk and click on the link Coronavirus Member FAQ.

Short News

How will the McCloud Judgement affect the LGPS?

When the LGPS changed from a final salary to a career average pension scheme in 2014, protections for older scheme members were introduced (referred to as an **Underpin**). Similar protections were provided in other public sector pension schemes. The Court of Appeal ruled that younger members of the Judges' and Firefighters' Pension schemes have been discriminated against because the protections do not apply to them. The Government has confirmed that there will be changes to all main public sector schemes, including the LGPS, to remove this age discrimination. This ruling is often called the **McCloud judgment**.

The Government is still considering exactly what changes need to be made to remove the discrimination from the LGPS. This means it has **NOT** been possible to reflect the impact of the judgment in your annual benefit statement this year. If you qualify for protection it will apply automatically - **you do not need to make a claim**.

For more information about the McCloud judgement, please see the frequently asked questions on the national LGPS website: www.lgpsmember.org/news/latest.php

Moving Home?

If you are moving address don't forget to make sure you let us know—not just to keep your record up to date but to make sure sensitive information doesn't go to your old address, putting you at risk of identify theft.



Requesting and estimate from us



You can request an estimate of your LGPS pension benefits from us if you are thinking of retiring. This will allow you to understand the

income you will receive from the LGPS when you retire.

If you want to request an estimate you can do so by filling in an estimate request form. This can be downloaded from our website under the Forms and Publications section.

Please be aware if you are under age 55 or more than 2 years from your potential retirement date we will ask you to use the online calculator on My Pension Online for an estimate of your retirement figures.

HMRC Lifetime Allowance and Annual Allowances for 2020/21

Lifetime Allowance—£1,073,100

Annual Allowance—£40,000 but may be reduced to as low as £10,000 depending on earnings.

Contribution Rates 2020/21 Active Members Only

National Fraud Initiative

Yearly Pay	Contribution Rate	
	Main Section	50/50 Section
Up to £14,600	5.5%	2.75%
More than £14,601 and up to £22,800	5.8%	2.9%
More than £22,801 and up to £37,100	6.5%	3.25%
More than £37,101 and up to £46,900	6.8%	3.4%
More than £46,901 and up to £65,600	8.5%	4.25%
More than £65,601 and up to £93,000	9.9%	4.95%
More than £93,001 and up to £109,500	10.5%	5.25%
More than £109,501 and up to £164,200	11.4%	5.7%
More than £164,201	12.5%	6.25%

Pensions Made Simple

You can find a series of short videos on topics in the Local Government Pension Scheme to help you understand more about your pension.

You can access the videos at <https://www.gwentpensionfund.co.uk/greater-gwent-torfaen-pension-fund/client-area/news/pensions-made-simple-short-videos/>

APC Limit Increased

The maximum amount of extra yearly pension you can buy through an APC has been increased for 2020/21 to £7,194.

The Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund has a duty to protect the public funds we administer. This includes taking part in the Government's National Fraud Initiative (NFI), and we may share information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for the purpose of preventing and detecting fraud.

NFI operates under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 to protect the public purse by matching data across public sector organisations, to prevent and detect fraud.

The NFI exercise is carried out every two years. Since the NFI started in 1996 it has helped trace £1.3 billion in fraud, error and overpayment across the UK

The 2020/21 NFI exercise is currently being undertaken and we are required to provide information about pensioner members to the Wales Audit Office for data matching.

NFI operates under the '**Code of Data Matching Practice**' to ensure compliance with legislation, in particular the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). You can read more information about data matching, and download the Code, on the Wales Audit Office website at: www.audit.wales/about-us/national-fraud-initiative