Cronfa Bensiwn
GWYNEDD
Pension Fund

Newsletter

Welcome to the latest update from the Gwynedd Pension Fund. This newsletter contains important information about contribution rates, pension increase, your Annual Benefit Statement, online security and upcoming pension awareness events.

How Much Do I Pay

If you are an active member of the **Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)**, you pay contributions into the scheme. These contributions benefit from **tax relief**, helping to reduce the amount of income tax you pay.

Your contribution rate is based on your pensionable pay and is usually between **5.5% and 12.5%**.

Annual Contribution Review
Every April, your employer reviews the contribution rate that applies to each of your employment contracts and adjusts it where necessary.

Salary bands effective from **1 April 2026** are available on our website and from your employer.

The 50/50 Section
If you are experiencing temporary financial difficulties, the LGPS offers a **50/50 section**.

This option allows you to:

✓ Pay half your normal pension contributions
✓ Build up half your normal pension benefits
✓ Remain in the scheme instead of opting out completely

The 50/50 section can be a useful short-term solution, while maintaining valuable pension protection.

Pension Increase 2026

Each April, LGPS benefits are revalued in line with the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**.

This applies to:

- Deferred pensions
- Pensions in payment
- The Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) pension built up by active members

For **April 2026**, the CPI increase applied to benefits was: **3.8%**

This increase is based on inflation for the 12-month period ending September 2025

Your Annual Benefit Statement Is Available Online

Your latest **Annual Benefit Statement (ABS)** is now available through your **My Pension Online** account. You can access your statement in the **"Documents"** section.

Active Members
Your statement shows the value of your pension as at **31 March 2026**, together with the value at Your **Normal Pension Age (NPA)**.

Deferred Members
Your statement shows the current value of your deferred pension assuming they are being taken at your NPA.

Watch Your Personal Pension Video
A personalised five-minute video is also available through your **My Pension Online** account.

Tailored specifically to your pension record, the video:

- Explains key information in your statement
- Highlights the most important figures
- Helps you understand your future retirement benefits

Improving Access and Fairness in the LGPS

The Government has introduced changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to make it fairer for all members. Most of these changes came into effect on **1 April 2026**, with some improvements being applied retrospectively to ensure eligible members receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

The changes cover a range of areas, including pension protections, survivor benefits and the way certain pension benefits are calculated. While not every change will affect all members, some may have a positive impact on your pension benefits now or in the future.

If any of these changes affect your LGPS record, we will update your pension benefits accordingly and contact you if any action is required.

For more information about the changes and how they may apply to you, please log in to your **My Pension Online** account and view the information available in the **Documents** section.

Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) Important Update

We would like to make AVC members aware that our contract with **Clerical Medical** will come to an end on **31 August 2026**.

As a result, all AVC arrangements will transfer to our new provider, **Legal & General**, from **1 September 2026**.

If you are an AVC member, further information about this change, including any action required, will be sent to you shortly.

As a result, we are no longer encouraging members to join the current arrangement, as it is due to close soon.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this transition.

HMRC Payment For Some Lower-earning LGPS Members

From **August 2026**, HMRC will contact eligible people who may be entitled to a new **Low Earner's Pension Paymen**t. The payment is aimed at low earners who missed out on pension tax relief because the LGPS uses a **net pay arrangement.**

You may qualify if you paid LGPS contributions from **2024/25** onwards, but did not receive tax relief because you paid no income tax.

There is **no need to apply** – HMRC will contact eligible members directly by letter or through their Personal Tax Account with details of how to receive the payment.

Beware of scams: HMRC will **never** ask you to transfer money, or provide PINs or passwords, to receive a payment.

Pensions Awareness Week 2026 (15-19 September 2026)

Pensions Awareness Week returns this September, offering practical guidance, expert webinars and useful resources to help people better understand their pension and plan for retirement.

The campaign encourages everyone to take a few simple steps, including checking pension contributions, reviewing retirement savings, searching for lost pension pots, updating beneficiary nominations and learning more about retirement options.

With billions of pounds estimated to be held in lost or forgotten pensions across the UK, finding old pension pots could significantly boost future retirement income.

Participants can take the **Pensions Challenge**, which includes access to live and on-demand webinars, pension guides, articles, FAQs and retirement planning tools.

A few minutes spent reviewing your pension today could make a big difference to your financial future.

More information on Pensions Awareness Week can be found on https://pensionawarenessday.com **and** https://www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/pension-awareness-day/

Stay Safe Online: Protecting Your LGPS Pension

Many of us manage important aspects of our lives online, including accessing pension information. Taking a few simple precautions can help keep your Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) account and personal data secure.

Protect your account by using a strong, unique password and avoid sharing it with anyone. Do not reuse the same password across multiple accounts. Consider using a password manager to keep track of them securely.

The Gwynedd Pension Fund portal also uses multi-factor authentication (MFA), with verification codes sent by email or SMS.

Be alert to pension scams. Fraudsters may contact you by phone, email, text message or social media. Warning signs include promises of high returns, pressure to act quickly, offers of early pension access, or unexpected requests for personal information.

Think before you click. Always verify emails and messages claiming to be from your pension provider before opening links, downloading attachments, or sharing information. If in doubt, contact your pension administrator using official contact details.

Keep your contact details up to date, including your email address, home address and telephone number, so important pension communications reach you securely.

Use secure devices and internet connections by keeping software updated, installing security patches, using trusted networks, and avoiding public Wi-Fi when accessing pension information.

Finally, **stay informed and be cautious.** If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Always check that financial firms are authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

Stop. Think Fraud. Taking a few simple precautions can help keep your LGPS pension and personal information safe.

A few moments of caution can help safeguard your pension savings and future retirement income.

Learn more: **https://stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk**

Contact Gwynedd Pension Fund

For more information about your LGPS benefits, contribution rates or pension account, please contact the Gwynedd Pension Fund team:

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