

# The Scribe

Autumn 2020

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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 your Autumn 2020 edition of **The Scribe**, the newsletter for retired members of the Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund and their dependants.

The past few months will have been a very uncertain and difficult time for many of you and we want to reassure you that your monthly pension will continue to be paid in the normal way and will not be affected by the disruption caused by Covid-19. The calculation and payment of pension benefits within the LGPS are set out in law and are therefore guaranteed.

Unfortunately it will not be possible to hold our annual meeting this year due to social distancing restrictions but we have included our usual summary of Pension Fund accounts and investments in this newsletter (see pages 6 to 9).

Your Autumn newsletter also contains the usual updates and news items - your pension pay dates for the year can be found on page 11 and our Autumn word search competition can be found on page 18.

The pensions team continue to work from home at this time, but telephone lines are back to normal operating hours so please do contact us if you have any questions about your pension. Full contact details can be found on the reverse of this newsletter.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and you are keeping safe and well.

**Councillor Julian Sharpe,  
Chairman, Berkshire Pension Fund Committee  
and Berkshire Pension Fund Advisory Panel**

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# Covid-19 LGPS update

The past few months have been very difficult for many of us and we would like to reassure our members that we are doing everything we can to keep our pension service running efficiently with limited disruption.

The pensions team continue to be available to help you with any queries. We have adapted working patterns to ensure we can continue providing a service whilst monitoring the latest Government advice.

**Access to offices** - Our offices remain closed to visitors at present. However you are still able to contact us via e-mail, telephone or post.

You may wish to use our self-service facility – ‘**my pension ONLINE**’ to update your details, view your monthly payslips or download your latest P60 information (see page 17 for more information).

**Will my pension value reduce as a result of Covid-19?** - During these uncertain times it is understandable that a lot of our members have concerns about their pension values and how these may be affected by stock market changes due to the financial impact of Covid-19.

As the LGPS is a Defined Benefit (DB) scheme your pension benefits are not linked to stock-markets or investment performance. Instead, your pension will continue to be paid to you on a monthly basis and will be increased in line with the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) every April.





# Annual Meeting 2020 - *update*

As you will be aware we normally hold our annual meeting in November at the Town Hall in Maidenhead.

Unfortunately due to Covid-19 restrictions we have had to cancel our annual meeting pension event this year in line with Government guidelines.

We have provided a summary of our investments and accounts in this newsletter and the full annual report will be available to download from our website in due course.

Regular scheme updates will also be available on our website and online self service facility.

We hope to hold our Annual Meeting as normal in 2021.



# Draft Fund Accounts 2019/2020

The Pension Fund is slowly maturing as benefits payable grow as more members retire so managing cash-flow is increasingly important.

The Pension Fund Panel are committed to managing the Fund's assets so that assets will not have to be sold to make benefit payments; in the past year this strategy resulted in net positive cash-flow of just under £40 million.

The Fund's assets continued to grow during the year as investment markets were strong. At the year end assets were in excess of £2.0 billion.



Income		£'000
Employer contributions		98,477
Employee contributions		28,635
Transfer values received		14,448
Investment income		40,463
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>182,023</b>
Expenditure		
Benefits Payable		113,361
Payments to and on account of leavers		20,532
Fund administration and management costs		24,764
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>158,657</b>
<b>Change in market value of investments</b>		<b>(100,361)</b>
<b>Net increase / (decrease) in fund during year</b>		<b>(76,996)</b>
Balance Sheet		
Investment assets		2,149,373
Investment liabilities		(154,074)
Current assets		12,258
Current liabilities		(2,610)
<b>Net assets at 31 March 2020</b>		<b>2,004,947</b>

# The Pension Fund in numbers



The Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund provides pensions for over 72,600 members. The figures provided below are the values at 31 March 2020.

72,686  Total membership	26,108 Active members
	27,233 Deferred members
	19,345 Retired members

**452**  
overseas  
payments  
every month  
to retired  
members

**13,984**  
members  
signed up for  
'my pension  
ONLINE'

**Total number  
of Fund  
employers**  
**318**

# Investments update 2019/2020

In continuing with the UK Government's initiative for LGPS Pension Funds to take advantage of the benefits of pooling their investments, the management of The Fund's assets transferred to The Local Pensions Partnership Investments ('LPPI') on 1 June 2018 and the transition of those assets to LPPI's management continues at pace. It is worth noting that the assets remain the legal property of The Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund.

LPPI has set up and oversees the investment of eight pooled fund vehicles as set out in the table opposite. It remains the responsibility of the Berkshire Pension Fund Committee to maintain and publish an Investment Strategy Statement (ISS) part of which determines the strategic allocation of the Fund's assets across the eight pooled funds available.

The table opposite provides a comparison between the actual and target weighting of The Fund's assets, at the dates indicated.

	March 2019		March 2020	
	Actual Weighting	Target Weighting	Actual Weighting	Target Weighting
<b>Public Equity</b>	38.3%	40.0%	38.2%	40.0%
<b>Credit</b>	12.5%	10.0%	10.4%	10.0%
<b>Private Equity</b>	12.9%	13.0%	14.1%	13.0%
<b>Diversifying Strategies</b>	3.6%	4.0%	3.2%	4.0%
<b>Real Estate</b>	13.3%	16.5%	14.7%	16.5%
<b>Infrastructure</b>	9.0%	12.5%	7.2%	12.5%
<b>Fixed Income</b>	2.9%	3.0%	2.9%	3.0%
<b>Cash</b>	7.5%	1.0%	9.3%	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>N.B. "Target Weighting" shown represents the agreed Strategic Asset Allocation ('SAA')</b>				



# How did investments perform?

Over the reporting period the Strategic Asset Allocation Weightings/Target Weightings remained unaltered. The appropriateness of the current SAA remains under review at all times to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

## How did investments perform?

Over the twelve-month period to the end of March 2020, The Fund returned -2.6%. This represents an underperformance of 8.2% against The Fund's Actuarial Target. During this period some of the Fund's investments were impacted by the Covid-19 crisis and detracted from returns. Since then markets have rebounded which has of course, been of benefit to the Fund. Over a three-year period to the end of March 2020, the Fund delivered a 2.7% annualised return underperforming its Actuarial Target by 3.6%.

It is important to remember that Pension Fund investments are long-term and whilst a pandemic

such as Covid-19 cannot be anticipated, the ups and downs of the stock market are normal when it comes to investing assets over many decades.

Most importantly, scheme members should be reassured that movements in investment performance in no way affect the pension benefits to which they are entitled under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations. The LGPS is a defined benefit scheme which means that the way in which benefits are calculated is set out in regulation and therefore not subject to changes in the stock market in the same way as benefits in a defined contribution scheme will be affected.



# Pensions increase 2020

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 2020 increase awarded was up to a maximum of **1.7%**, applied to your pension from Monday 6 April 2020. If you were in receipt of your annual pension on 6 April 2020 and entitled to receive an increase this was detailed in your personalised pensions increase booklet which was posted to you in April.

Previous year's pensions increase percentages are listed opposite:

Year	Increase
<b>2019</b>	<b>2.4%</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>2.7%</b>

# Pension pay dates 2020/2021

Your Berkshire Pension is paid into your chosen bank or building society account on the last working day of each month. We have detailed below your pension payment dates for the next 12 months for your convenience. **Please note these pay dates apply to UK bank accounts only.**

<b>Monday 30 November 2020</b>
<b>Wednesday 23 December 2020</b>
<b>Friday 29 January 2021</b>
<b>Friday 26 February 2021</b>
<b>Wednesday 31 March 2021</b>
<b>Friday 30 April 2021</b>
<b>Friday 28 May 2021</b>
<b>Wednesday 30 June 2021</b>
<b>Friday 30 July 2021</b>
<b>Tuesday 31 August 2021</b>
<b>Thursday 30 September 2021</b>
<b>Friday 29 October 2021</b>

**December 2020 payday** - Your December 2020 pension payment will be credited to your bank account on **Wednesday 23 December 2020** in time for Christmas.

**Pension payslips** - A payslip will be issued to you if your net monthly pension payment has changed by more than 50 pence from the previous month. However you will automatically receive a payslip in April and May to reflect the pensions increase applied from April each year.



# Tax office contact details

If there is a change to your tax code, the Tax Office will issue an electronic notification to our Pension Payroll team to confirm details of the change.

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

<b>Postal address</b>	<b>HM Revenue &amp; Customs Pay As You Earn PO Box 1970 Liverpool L75 1WX</b>
<b>Telephone</b>	<b>0300 200 3300</b>
<b>Website</b>	<b><a href="http://www.hmrc.gov.uk">www.hmrc.gov.uk</a></b>



## 2020/2021 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 amount of income tax you pay in each tax year depends on:

- **how much of your income is above your personal allowance**
- **how much of this falls within each tax band**

The standard personal allowance from **6 April 2020** to **5 April 2021** remains at **£12,500**.

**Do you live in Scotland?** If you live in Scotland you will receive the same personal allowance for 2020/2021, but your tax bandwidths will be different. HMRC will determine if you are a Scottish tax payer.

*Please note - the income tax you pay is calculated based on all your taxable income from all sources (including your State Pension).*

# The 'McCloud' judgement

When the LGPS changed from a Final Salary to a Career Average pension scheme in 2014, protections for older scheme members were introduced. 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.

If you qualify for protection and have membership in the LGPS after 31 March 2014 the changes will apply to you, even if you have left the scheme and retired.

If you qualify for protection it will apply automatically - you do not need to make a claim.

For more information, see the frequently asked questions on the national LGPS website:

[https://lgpsmember.org/news/story/mccloud\\_qa-nda.php](https://lgpsmember.org/news/story/mccloud_qa-nda.php)





# Updating personal details

## *Changing your contact details*

If you change address, contact details, name or partnership status, please notify the payroll team immediately so that we can continue to send you important information about your pension, e.g pensions increase notifications, P60s.

Please note that changes of address can be accepted over the telephone or by e-mail. We have also provided a change of address form on **page 15** for your convenience.



## *Changing your Bank Details*

If you change your bank account details please notify us in writing with a signed letter confirming your new **sort-code, account number or building society reference number (if applicable)**.

We have provided a form on **page 16** for your convenience.



Alternatively you can write to us directly:  
**Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund**  
**Minster Court**  
**22-30 York Road**  
**Maidenhead**  
**Berkshire**  
**SL6 1SF**

**For changes to overseas accounts please e-mail or telephone for a form to complete.**

# Change of address notification

Please complete the form below with your new address details and return to: Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund, Minster Court, 22-30 York Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1SF

## Your personal details

Surname

Effective date of change

Forenames

Your telephone no.

National Insurance no.

E-mail

Pension no.

Old address

Your signature

Postcode

Date

New address

Postcode

Please ensure you have signed and dated this form before returning it to the address below:

**Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund, Minster Court, 22-30 York Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1SF**



# Change of bank details notification

For security reasons, we are unable to accept notifications of bank changes over the telephone or by e-mail. Therefore please confirm the new details in writing to: **Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund, Minster Court, 22-30 York Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1SF**. Alternatively you can complete the form below to confirm any changes.

## Your personal details

Surname
Forenames
National insurance no.
Pension no.
Your telephone no.
E-mail

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 at the address below:

**Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund,  
Minster Court, 22-30 York Road, Maidenhead,  
Berkshire, SL6 1SF**



# Take control of your pension



'my pension ONLINE' is an internet based application which enables you to securely access and update your own pension details online via the Royal County of 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:

- **View/update your personal details**
- **View your P60 and payment history**
- **Access all publications to calculate the value of your dependant benefits**

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

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

## Upload your documents *online*

**Did you know you can upload documents to your own pension record?** Rather than sending us forms in the post or e-mailing us you can upload documents securely via 'my pension ONLINE' so that they appear on your pension record.

This is particularly useful if you need to send paperwork to us or provide us with verification of your date of birth or marital status.

The 'Document upload' facility can be found in the '**Documents**' section of your online account.



# Word search competition

In our Spring 2020 edition of **The Scribe** we invited our readers to try our Spring Sudoku competition. Thank you to everyone who entered.

For another chance to win a £25 Marks & Spencer gift card why not try our Autumn word search competition.

Please send your entry to **Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund, Minster Court, 22-30 York Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1SF**, to reach us by **28 February 2021**. The winner will be drawn at random from the correct entries received. Good luck!

*Please note this competition is not open to members of the administration or investment pension teams.*

Name	
Address	
Tel. number	

*Can you find the 12 'Winter' themed words in the grid below?*

C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	B	N	Q
S	V	S	H	B	T	I	W	W	L	K	M
Q	N	Q	L	S	C	I	L	W	I	W	C
W	O	O	E	E	I	C	N	Z	Q	Z	
E	D	R	W	L	D	V	R	D	Z	K	C
C	F	B	W	F	H	V	E	R	A	U	O
U	L	Y	G	Z	L	C	J	C	R	W	S
R	B	R	L	N	E	A	G	W	D	F	H
P	D	N	C	M	I	R	K	P	Z	J	A
S	Z	N	B	W	F	I	J	E	X	J	T
Y	S	E	V	O	L	G	K	S	N	M	Q
N	R	S	C	A	R	F	R	S	W	Q	S

BLIZZARD	CHRISTMAS	DECEMBER
FROST	GLOVES	HAT
ICE	SCARF	SKIING
SLED	SNOWFLAKE	SPRUCE





# Contacts directory...

We have provided some contacts below which you may find helpful:

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## **Pension Wise**

**[www.pensionwise.gov.uk](http://www.pensionwise.gov.uk)**

**0800 138 3944**

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## **Citizens Advice Bureau**

**[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)**

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## **Age UK**

**[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**

**0800 678 1602**

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## **Find an advisor**

**[www.unbiased.co.uk](http://www.unbiased.co.uk)**

**0800 0236868**

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## **The Money Advice Service**

**[www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)**

**0800 1387777**

## *Pensions cold-calling*

As reported in previous editions of *The Scribe*, a ban on pensions cold calling has now become law as part of the Government crackdown on pension fraud. It is now illegal for companies to make unsolicited calls to people about their pensions.

This new law should go towards stopping cold calling resulting in people being scammed out of their pension savings. Companies that break the rules can face fines of up to £500,000. If you suspect a scam, report it ... report to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) by contacting their Consumer Helpline on **0800 111 6768** or using the reporting form at **[www.fca.org.uk](http://www.fca.org.uk)**

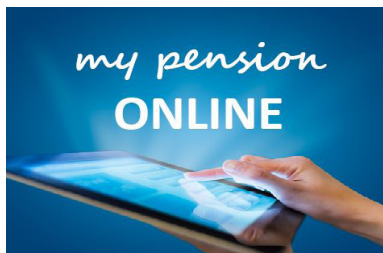
# Contact us

## Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund

Minster Court, 22-30 York Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1SF

**Pensions Helpdesk: 01628 796 668**

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



[info@berkshirepensions.org.uk](mailto:info@berkshirepensions.org.uk)  
[www.berkshirepensions.org.uk](http://www.berkshirepensions.org.uk)

If you would like this newsletter in large print or audio please contact us on 01628 796754 or e-mail [info@berkshirepensions.org.uk](mailto: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](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk)



Royal Borough  
of Windsor &  
Maidenhead