



f focus:



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Your retirement, your way

It's never too early to think about your retirement goals and how you will achieve them.

There are plenty of options for when you want to start claiming your Fund pension, and it's important to consider the ones that are available to you so you can make an informed decision.

Here are some options that may be available when you take your benefits:



Amount of lump sum – you may be able to take a larger lump sum and less pension, or a smaller lump sum and more pension



Extra pension for your dependants – some members have the option to give up part of their pension to provide more for a named dependant



Additional Voluntary Contributions – these are usually taken at the same time as your main Fund benefits, or you can transfer them to another arrangement



Flexible pension – you may be able to draw a higher pension before you claim your State Pension, and a lower pension afterwards

For more information on your retirement options, go to btppensions.co.uk/in-the-fund/planning-for-retirement/my-options.

What to do next

- Look at your Member Guide, which you can find in the **'My Library'** section of your myFund account when you log in
- Watch the **'Understanding your retirement options with a defined benefit pension'** video, which is available on the link to the left in the blue box
- Watch the **'A guide to: Retirement Option Form'** video, also available on the link to the left in the blue box
- Chat to your employer, or
- Get in touch with Railpen on either csu@railpen.com or **0800 012 1117**

Take advice before you make a decision

Before you make a decision, especially when you're thinking about transferring your benefits, we recommend that you speak with an independent financial adviser (IFA) authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Transferring your pension does involve risk and you may have to seek advice by law if the value of your defined benefit pension is more than £30,000, and you're looking to transfer to a defined contribution or personal pension arrangement.

Contact Liverpool Victoria on **0800 023 4187** or visit unbiased.co.uk to find IFAs in your area.

Message from your Trustee Chair

Welcome to your Summer issue of Focus for 2024.

In the last issue we included a summary of retirement options for you as a Fund member: normal retirement, early retirement, late retirement, and ill-health retirement. In this new issue, we've taken this a step further and highlighted the ways in which you can take your pension. For more information on your options, go to btppensions.co.uk/in-the-fund/planning-for-retirement/my-options.

You may have noticed that we've also introduced two-factor authentication (2FA) when it comes to logging in to or registering for your online account. This makes accessing your pension online more convenient and secure.

Once you've entered your password, you'll then be sent a unique, one-time security code to your registered email address.

When you've logged in to your account for the first time using 2FA, we recommend that you add and verify your phone number. This way you have different device options when you log in, just in case you ever lose access to one. Go to the 'Contact Details' section under 'My Details', and then head to the 'Mobile Number' section. The mobile number you want to use needs to be verified before you can use it to log in.

Lastly, the next full valuation of the Fund will be performed at the end of this year. A funding update is currently being calculated as at 31 December 2023, and the results will be shared via a Summary Funding Statement.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter. I encourage you to fill out the survey on the back page - it will only take a couple of minutes. Filling in the survey really helps us to learn what is useful to you and what isn't, so make sure you have your say on the future editions of Focus.

With best wishes,

Christine Kernoghan
Trustee Chair



How do you want to hear about your pension?

From the end of this year, the following documents will be online only, unless you've asked to keep getting things via paper.

- Annual Benefit Statements
- Pension Saving Statements
- Summary Funding Statements
- Your Focus newsletter
- Wake-up letters – these are a reminder to start making plans for your retirement, which you'll get before you're due to stop work. We may still send you a pre-retirement pack to help you prepare as well

You may not get all of these documents as it depends on your circumstances. But any documents you do get will be available online only from the end of 2024, unless you opt in to paper.

What you need to do

If you've already opted into paper, or registered for a myFund account to get things digitally, then you don't need to do anything else. If this isn't the case, here's what you need to do if you want to:

- **Go paperless** - if you're happy to get your documents digitally, then you don't need to tell us that. But you will need a myFund account to access them online. If you already have an account, you'll start getting your documents online automatically. If you haven't, sign up at btppensions.co.uk/register.
- **Continue with paper** - if you prefer to keep getting things via paper, you will need to tell us. Simply fill in the form at btppensions.co.uk/resources/opt-in-to-paper-communications or scan the QR code.



You may continue to get future communications giving you the chance to opt-in, but you only need to tell us once. You can opt for paper, even if you have a myFund account.

- **Do nothing** - if you don't register for an online account and don't opt in to paper, your personal documents will still be sent to you by post. However, other items such as your Focus newsletter will only be available on your BTP website.

Let us know if you've moved house

You also need to go online to tell us if you've changed your address. You can do this by logging in to your account and going to the 'My Details' section. More documents and processes are expected to follow online, but you may continue to get some by post until then. If you do opt-in to paper, these documents will still be sent to you by post.



Changes to your AVC funds

The Trustee has reviewed the investment funds and lifestyle strategies available to members in the BRASS and AVC Extra arrangements.

As a result, we're making changes to the funds and lifestyle strategies from September this year.

The names of the lifestyle strategies are changing

Lifestyle strategies are investment options for members who don't want to actively manage their fund choices, and would prefer to have it done by the Trustee. After asking a sample of members what would make the most sense to them, these will be the new names:

Current Lifestyle Strategy Name	New Lifestyle Strategy Name
Full Cash Withdrawal	Target Lump Sum
Flexible Drawdown	Target Flexible Drawdown
Annuity Purchase	Target Annuity

The UK Government Fixed-Interest Bond Fund is changing

The UK Government Fixed-Interest Bond Fund invests in bonds issued by the UK government. The underlying bonds held within this fund will change, taking less time for the bond to be repaid. There also won't be as much movement in the bond's price, both up and down, which is often referred to 'volatility'.

This change is to go from building a pot that will be used to buy a regular income, called an annuity, to one that helps protect the value of a member's pot at retirement.

There will be no change to the fund name. And there will be no change in the value of the fund at the switch date.

The objective of the Target Annuity Lifestyle is changing

Previously called the Annuity Purchase Lifestyle Strategy, the Target Annuity Lifestyle will change from only protecting the value of annuity income expected to be purchased, to one that also protects the value of a member's pot at retirement.

Check your investment choices are still right for you

We believe that the changes are in the best interests of the majority of our members. If you hold the UK Government Fixed-Interest Bond Fund, the volatility of your pension pot is expected to reduce. We believe this is important, particularly as you approach retirement.

It is really important that you know which funds you are invested in and make sure that you are still happy that choice meets your needs. The quickest and easiest way to do that is to register for, or log in to, your myFund account at btppensions.co.uk/login.

You can also set, check or change your Target Retirement Age (TRA) in your online myFund account so that it accurately reflects when you plan to take your benefits. Your chosen TRA does not need to be the same as your Section's Normal Retirement Age. It could be earlier or later, depending on your plans.

Look after your financial wellbeing with MoneyFit

MoneyFit is a free, simple tool to help you take control of your personal finances.

It offers practical tips to manage your money, and possibly free up more to save for your life after work.

There are some new features which can help you personalise your MoneyFit action plan. These include:

- Money Modellers to see the impact of small savings over time
- the MoneyFit Gym where you can work out a plan for your retirement
- the Resource Zone to learn about financial topics, such as saving for life after work

- the Money Glossary which aims to provide simple, clear definitions of financial terms
- help and support with debt, mental health and how to avoid scams
- financial wellbeing tips including creating your own personal budget

You can try MoneyFit when you log in to your online myFund account – find it in the 'Planning for the future' section.



General Election 2024 – new Labour government

On 4 July, Sir Keir Starmer’s Labour Party won a majority in the House of Commons following the general election. This has formed a new Labour government.

What does this mean for pensions?

Labour’s manifesto pledged to keep the State Pension triple lock and to make reforms to workplace pensions, to deliver better outcomes for UK savers and pensioners. Following their commitment in the manifesto to carry out a review of the UK pension landscape, the new government has announced the launch of a review to ‘boost investment, increase pension pots, and tackle waste in the pensions system’.

Although in earlier statements they said they had plans to reinstate the Lifetime Allowance (LTA), which was abolished on 6 April 2024, this wasn’t covered in their manifesto. And in the run-up to the election, they confirmed that the LTA would not be reinstated. It’s not currently clear if the intended review of the pension landscape will cover this and other pension tax-related matters.

In a paper published earlier this year, Labour also promised to renationalise nearly all passenger rail services within 5 years if it won the election. They also said they’ll establish a new arm’s length public body – Great British Railways – that will be responsible for the day-to-day operational delivery of the railways.

The King’s Speech

The King’s Speech at the State Opening of Parliament on 17 July 2024 set out the new government’s proposed policies and legislation for the coming Parliamentary session, including a new Pension Schemes Bill. The Bill is expected to include measures to introduce:

- automatic consolidation of deferred small defined contribution (DC) pension pots
- a new Value for Money framework to demonstrate pension schemes are delivering value
- new duties for DC scheme trustees to offer retirement income solutions, and
- a framework for consolidating the defined benefit (DB) market through commercial superfunds

The general election process had slowed the progress of some pension developments, including the further set of tax regulations to address issues following removal of the LTA, and the publication of the Pension Regulator’s DB funding code. Now that a new government is in place, further progress is expected on these.

Liz Kendall, the MP for Leicester West, has been appointed as the new Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, having held the role in Labour’s shadow cabinet. Emma Reynolds, MP for Wycombe, has been appointed as Pensions Minister. She has a ministerial role at both the DWP and HM Treasury and is expected to work on pensions policy within both departments.

Get in touch



Share your feedback to help us improve Focus. Your opinion is important to us.

Fill in our online survey at surveyMonkey.com/r/FocusAug24 or find the survey by scanning the QR code.



Pension queries

Visit: btppensions.co.uk

Email: csu@railpen.com

Telephone: **0800 012 1117**
(Mon - Fri, 8am-5pm)

Your opinion matters



We’d like to invite you to join Platform.

Platform is our voluntary member feedback community. We often bounce ideas off our Platform subscribers and ask for their feedback on the pension communications we develop for all our members. We do this because we know pensions can be tricky and want to ensure our members understand their Fund pension.

So if you’d like to share your opinion, join Platform. In return, you’ll be entered into our prize draw with the chance to win £150 worth of shopping vouchers at the end of 2024. Join at btppensions.co.uk/resources/platform.

Follow us on X



Receive Fund updates on the go by following us on X. Go to x.com/BTTPensionFund and click ‘Follow’ for information and guidance on your Fund pension along with videos and tips.



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