



# Quarterly Newsletter

DECEMBER 2025 | ISSUE NO.3



## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 FESTIVE PERIOD OFFICE CLOSURE
- 2 STAY SCAM-SAFE THIS CHRISTMAS
- 3 BORDER TO COAST WELCOMES SEVEN ADDITIONAL FUNDS
- 4 EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT  
Shining a light on our incredible team members!
- 5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME PROPOSALS
- 6 THE IMPLICATIONS OF OPTING OUT OF THE LGPS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

## WELCOME TO THE WINTER EDITION OF THE TYNE AND WEAR PENSION FUND NEWSLETTER

### FESTIVE PERIOD OFFICE CLOSURE

#### Pensions Office and Helpline Holiday Arrangements

As in previous years, the pensions office and helpline will be closed over the festive period. Please take note of the following changes to our opening hours:

**The pensions office and helpline will close at 12:00pm on Wednesday, 24th December 2025**

**The helpline will reopen at 09:00am on Monday, 5th January 2026.**

**The pensions office will reopen at 10:00am on Monday, 5th January 2026.**



We wish everyone a safe, peaceful, and enjoyable festive season and we send you and your families our best wishes for 2026. Thank you for your understanding and continued support.



### MYPENSION

Our online service mypension is available to all members where they can:

- View and update personal details
- View their pension information
- View Annual Benefit Statements
- Send secure messages



## STAY SCAM-SAFE THIS CHRISTMAS

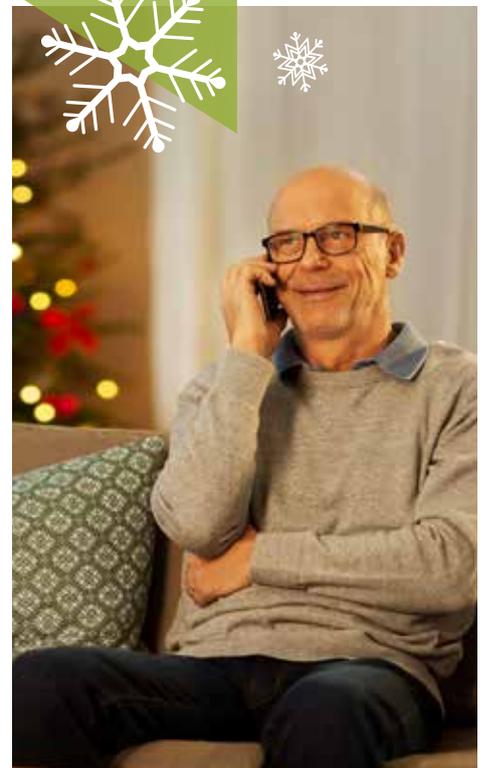
The festive season can be a time of financial pressure, and scammers know it. They often target people who may be looking for extra money or quick cash deals. Protect your pension and your future by staying alert.

### Why Christmas is a Risky Time:

- Scammers exploit urgency and goodwill during the holidays.
- Offers of “special investment opportunities” or “fast cash” are common traps.
- Fraudsters may use festive messaging to appear friendly and trustworthy.

### Top Tips to Keep Safe:

- **IGNORE UNSOLICITED OFFERS** – whether by phone, email, or social media.
- **DON'T RUSH DECISIONS** – pressure to act quickly is a red flag.
- **CHECK CREDENTIALS** – use the FCA's ScamSmart tool to verify advisers.
- **STICK TO OFFICIAL LGPS CHANNELS** – never transfer through third parties.
- **TALK TO SOMEONE** - you trust before making any changes.



**REMEMBER:** If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Your pension is for life – don't let a scammer steal your future.

# BORDER TO COAST WELCOMES SEVEN ADDITIONAL FUNDS

Border to Coast Pensions Partnership is in the process of expanding its membership, welcoming seven additional Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds into the partnership. This development marks a significant milestone for Border to Coast and the existing partners, including the Tyne and Wear Pension Fund (TWPF) and the Teesside Pension Fund (TPF).



The seven new funds joining Border to Coast are Cambridgeshire, East Sussex, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Northamptonshire and West Sussex. Their inclusion increases the partnership's collective assets under management to around £110 billion and further strengthens the partnership as the largest LGPS asset pool.

## For members of TWPF and TPF, this expansion brings several benefits:

- **Increased Scale:** With more funds involved, Border to Coast can leverage greater economies of scale, making investment management more cost-effective for all partners.
- **Broader Investment Opportunities:** A larger pool means more resources to explore a broader range of asset classes and investment opportunities, which can potentially enhance long-term returns.
- **Enhanced Collaboration:** The addition of new funds fosters increased collaboration and knowledge sharing across the partnership, driving innovation and best practice.



While the day-to-day administration of your pension remains unchanged, the enlarged partnership enables Border to Coast to negotiate better investment terms and access specialist expertise. This enhances the ability to secure strong, sustainable returns for members, supporting the long-term affordability of the Scheme.

The inclusion of seven new funds is a testament to the strength and reputation of Border to Coast as a collaborative investment vehicle for LGPS funds. As the partnership continues to grow, TWPF and TPF members can be confident that their funds are part of a forward-thinking, robust, and increasingly influential investment pool.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## Meet Our Newest Team Member Supporting the Helpline

We are delighted to introduce Jenna Brown, who has recently joined our team and will be working on the helpline, providing support and guidance to our valued members. Jenna joined us a few weeks ago and has already made a positive impression with her warm and approachable manner. We are thrilled to have Jenna on board and are confident that she will be a fantastic addition to the team. Please join us in welcoming her and don't hesitate to say hello if you speak to her on the phone!



## Here are a few words from Jenna:

Hi everyone! I'm Jenna Brown and I've just joined the Member Services team in Pensions. Some of you may remember me from my first time at South Tyneside Council, when I worked in Revenues and Benefits. I completed my apprenticeship there and picked up so many valuable skills in customer service and administration - it really set me up for everything that's followed.

After that, I discovered a real love for social media and marketing, so I took the chance to explore different industries. I ended up working with fashion companies, estate agencies, and hospitality businesses, which gave me a completely new perspective and helped me grow creatively and professionally.

Recently, though, I felt the pull back to the council... and honestly, I'm so glad I listened to it. It genuinely feels like I've come home! The team have been so warm and welcoming, and everyone has been incredibly helpful while I get to grips with my new role - including taking calls on the helpline and learning the ins and outs of supporting our members. I'm really excited to build my career in pensions and to bring everything I've learned along the way back into the council. I'm looking forward to what's ahead!

“

*I'm really excited to build my career in pensions*

”



# LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME PROPOSALS

## Key Changes Proposed for the LGPS in England and Wales

The government has launched a consultation on four key proposals aimed at updating the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in England and Wales. The proposals, which are listed below, primarily address eligibility and benefits within the scheme, reflecting ongoing efforts to modernise public sector pensions.

### 1. Normal Minimum Pension Age

The consultation seeks views on changes to the Normal Minimum Pension Age (NMPA), which is the age at which scheme members can usually access their pension benefits. Adjustments to the NMPA from age 55 to age 57, are being considered to align with broader changes to public sector pensions and to ensure consistency with tax rules.

### 2. Pension Access for Mayors and Councillors

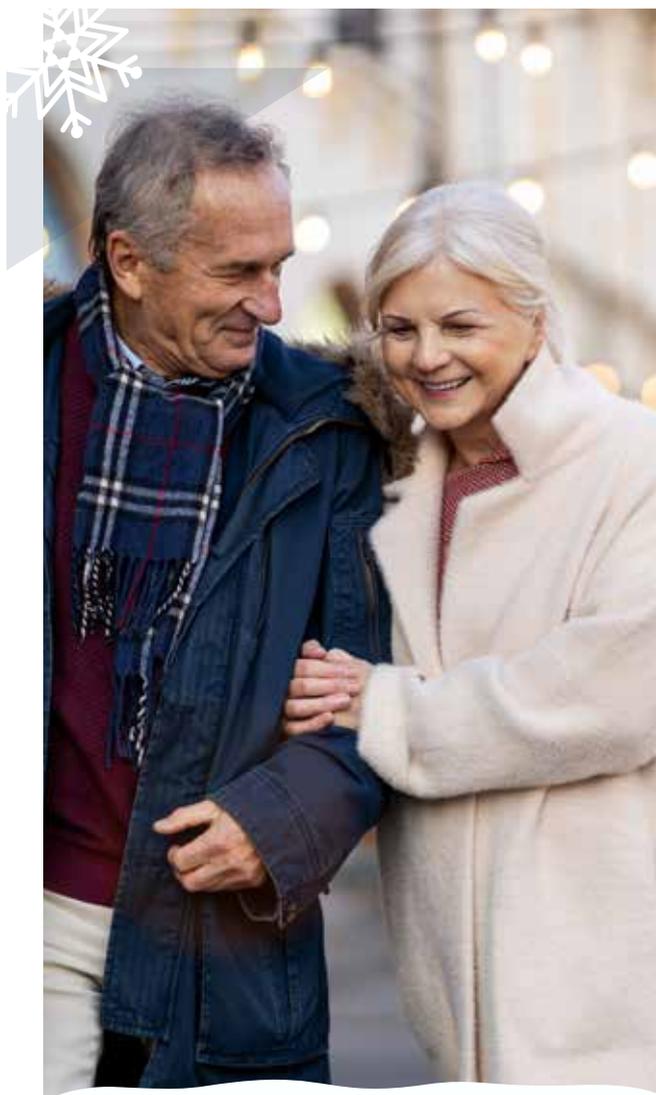
One of the proposals would amend the current rules regarding eligibility for LGPS membership for mayors and councillors and allowing them to join the LGPS. The aim is to clarify and potentially expand access, ensuring fair treatment and clear guidance on who can participate in the scheme.

### 3. Academies in the LGPS

The consultation addresses issues relating to academies' participation in the LGPS. It explores how academies are treated as scheme employers and considers options to ensure their continued and effective involvement, supporting both staff and scheme stability.

### 4. New Fair Deal

A 'new Fair Deal' is proposed, which would strengthen protections for employees who are compulsorily transferred out of local government service. This aims to provide reassurance that affected staff will maintain access to the LGPS.



## Draft Regulations Published

Draft regulations accompanying the proposals on pension access for mayors and councillors, as well as the new Fair Deal, have been published alongside the consultation. These drafts are open for comment, giving stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback and influence the final regulations.

Stakeholders are encouraged to review the consultation documents and submit their views to help shape the future of the LGPS.





## THE IMPLICATIONS OF OPTING OUT OF THE LGPS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is one of the most valuable employment benefits available to public sector workers in the UK. However, some employees consider opting out due to financial pressures or personal circumstances. While this is a legal right, the decision carries significant long-term implications that should be carefully weighed.

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU OPT OUT?

The consequences of opting out depend on how long you've been a member of the scheme:

- **Less than 3 months:** You'll be treated as if you were never a member. Your employer will refund any contributions you've made.
- **Between 3 months and 2 years:** You may be eligible for a refund (subject to 20% tax) or a transfer to another qualifying pension scheme.
- **More than 2 years:** You will receive deferred benefits, meaning your pension is preserved until you reach retirement age. However, if you rejoin the LGPS later, you cannot combine your previous and new periods of membership.

### Key Benefits You Lose by Opting Out

Opting out of the LGPS means giving up a range of secure and legally protected benefits:

- **Employer Contributions:** Employers contribute a significant portion toward your pension.
- **Tax Relief:** Pension contributions are made before tax, reducing your taxable income. Opting out means you will likely pay more tax. For example, a basic rate taxpayer contributing £100 a month saves £20 in tax.
- **Life Cover:** While in the scheme, you're covered for a death-in-service lump sum (typically three times your salary).
- **Family Protection:** The LGPS provides survivor pensions for spouses, civil partners, and eligible children.
- **Inflation-Proofed Pension:** Your pension increases with the cost of living, offering long-term financial security.

### Alternatives to Opting Out

If affordability is the issue, the LGPS offers a 50/50 option, where you pay half the contributions and build up half the pension benefits. This allows you to stay in the scheme while reducing your monthly outgoings, and you still retain full life and ill-health cover.

### Final Thoughts

Opting out of the LGPS is a serious decision with lasting financial consequences. It's strongly recommended you seek advice from an independent financial adviser before proceeding. The LGPS is more than just a pension—it's a comprehensive financial safety net for you and your family.