

Welcome to your Annual Benefit Statement!

Your Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) is an estimate of the current value of your pension benefits at 31 March 2020. This guide will help you read your ABS, check we have the correct information about you, and answer your Frequently Asked Questions ([FAQs](#)). We receive a high number of queries at this time of year, so we ask that you please read this guide first before contacting us.

Before you read your ABS, remember that....

- All information we hold is provided to us by your employer. If you think we have incorrect information, you should contact them in the first instance. You have the right to appeal if you disagree the pay information provided, but please read this guide thoroughly first.
- This statement is based on your pension details as at 31 March 2020. If you've had changes since then, they won't be reflected in your ABS. Pay information is updated at 31 March each year, but you can use your 'my pension online' account to check that any changes to your personal details made after 31 March have been updated.
- To be entitled to a deferred pension, you need to have paid into the scheme for at least two years.
- If you have a 'scheme pays' deduction or a 'pension sharing order', this has not been deducted from the amounts shown on your statement.
- You can look up any pension terms you're not familiar with in the [glossary](#) available on our website.

Section One – Personal Details

This section shows the personal information we hold about you as well as the pay information used to calculate your pension benefits.

Personal information - Please contact your employer immediately if any personal details are incorrect.

Partnership status - This will be 'M' if you've not told us about your relationship status. This is just a default setting and doesn't impact on your pension benefits in any way. You don't have to tell us about your partnership status, but you can if you like.

Payroll number - The payroll number identifies the employment that the ABS statement relates to.

Date joined scheme - This is the date that you started paying into the Buckinghamshire Pension Fund.

Section of the scheme at 31 March 2020 - You are enrolled in the 'MAIN' section when you join. If you were in the 50/50 section of the scheme at 31 March 2020, it will say '50/50'.

CARE pensionable pay in year to 31 March 2020 - This is the total of your actual pensionable pay between 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020. (See [glossary](#) for the full definition of pensionable pay).

Final salary pensionable pay - This is used to calculate the value of your final salary pension benefits. If you joined the scheme after 1 April 2014, this figure is not used to calculate your pension benefits.

Section Two – Summary of Total Benefits at 31 March 2020

This section shows the estimated value of your pension benefits at 31 March 2020.

Annual pension - This is how much your annual pension is worth at 31 March 2020. [Section Three](#) and [Section Four](#) shows you how this figure has been calculated.

Automatic lump sum - If you were in the scheme before 1 April 2008, you will have an automatic lump sum. If you joined after this date, this amount will be £0.

Death in service lump sum – The estimated amount your nominated person or charitable trust could receive if you die while paying in. This is 3 x your annual pensionable pay. If you have another LGPS pension account, the greater of your active, deferred or pensioner death grant will be paid. You can make or change a nomination on 'my pension online', otherwise, you can complete an '[Expression of Wish Death Grant Nomination Form](#)' available on our website.

Annual survivor's pension - The amount we estimate your eligible spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner would receive if you die.

Lifetime allowance - The total value of your pension pot at 31 March 2020.

Percentage of LTA used (this employment) - Percentage of the [lifetime allowance](#) this pension uses up.

Your nomination details - The person(s) or charitable trust nominated to receive your death grant.

Section Three – Career Average Pension Benefits at 31 March 2020

Section Three and Four show you how we've calculated the figures in [Section Two](#) (current value). They are not separate amounts. As the scheme changed from a final salary scheme to a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme on 1 April 2014, pension benefits before and after this date are calculated differently.

Section Three shows the pension benefits you've built up between 1 April 2014 - 31 March 2020. The date your CARE pension benefits are payable from without reductions, is shown in the header. This date is called your Normal Pension Age (NPA).

Row 1: Pensionable pay for the year to 31 March 2020 in main section - This is the same as your 'CARE pensionable pay' shown in [Section One](#). If you have not been in the MAIN section this will be £0.

Pensionable pay for the year to 31 March 2020 in 50/50 section - This is the same as your 'CARE pensionable pay' shown in [Section One](#). If you have not been in the 50/50 section this will be £0.

Row 2: Amount of pension built up in the year to 31 March 2020 - This is the calculation of how your pension has built up between 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020.

Main section - The total pension you have built up between 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020 in the main section. It is calculated as $1/49 \times$ your 'CARE pensionable pay' shown in [Section One](#).

50/50 section - The total pension you have built up between 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020 in the 50/50 section. It is calculated as $1/98 \times$ your 'CARE pensionable pay' shown in [Section One](#).

Additional pension bought - This is the total of any Additional Pension Contributions (APCs) you have purchased between 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020. If you have not purchased an APC, it will be £0.

Transfers in - The total of any transfers in of earned CARE pension. This will be £0 if you have not transferred in between 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020 or have transferred in membership rather than earned CARE pension.

Total - This is the total of all the above. It is your pension build-up for the year.

Row 3: Total career average pension in the year to 31 March 2020 - This is the annual pension you have built up between 1 April 2014 - 31 March 2020.

Previous year closing balance - The total annual pension built up between 1 April 2014 - 31 March 2019.

Adjustment for the cost of living - The total cost of living increase added to your annual pension.

In year build-up - This is the same as the total in the previous calculation ([Section Three](#), row 2).

Total career average pension at 31 March 2020 - This is the total of the previous three figures. This figure is added to the final salary 'annual pension total' (if applicable) in [Section Four](#) to form the 'annual pension' figure in [Section Two](#). If you were not in the scheme before 1 April 2014, this amount will be the same as the 'annual pension' shown in [Section Two](#).

Section Four – Final Salary Benefits at 31 March 2020

Final salary pension benefits (those built up before 1 April 2014) are not calculated until you leave the scheme. This section is an estimate of these pension benefits based on your current final salary pensionable pay shown in [Section One](#). The NPA for your final salary benefits is shown in the header. **Late retirement increases are not included on this year's ABS.**

Final salary pay - This is the same as the 'final salary pensionable pay' shown in [Section One](#).

Annual pension total - This is the total of the two amounts directly below (60th and 80th annual pensions). This is the estimated final salary annual pension. It is added to the total CARE annual pension ([Section Three](#)) to form the current value of annual pension ([Section Two](#)).

Including 60ths - The total estimated final salary pension in respect of the period between 1 April 2008 - 31 March 2014. This is calculated as $1/60 \times \text{total membership} \times \text{final salary pay}$.

+ 80ths - The total estimated final salary pension calculated before 1 April 2008. This is calculated as $1/80 \times \text{total membership} \times \text{final salary pay}$. (See [Section Six](#) for your total membership).

Automatic lump sum - A tax free lump sum attached to any pre 1 April 2008 pension benefits.

Section Five – Projections if you remain contributing to the Scheme until your NPA

This is an estimate of the pension benefits you might receive if you continued to contribute to the scheme, and your pay remained the same, year on year until your NPA. Your CARE pension NPA is the same as your State Pension Age (SPA). Your final salary NPA will be 65 or lower. This estimate is a rough guide only. It assumes nothing will change in your circumstances. It does not take account of cost of living increases or any reductions that may apply for taking your pension early. Also, the final salary pay used to calculate any final salary pension benefits may be higher or lower on your actual leaving date. **Late retirement increases are not included on this year's ABS.** If you're thinking of retiring soon, [contact us](#) for a detailed estimate.

Total pension at NPA - The estimated annual pension at your NPA. The two amounts shown below are included in this total.

Including projected Career Average Pension to NPA - The total estimated CARE pension payable at NPA.

Including projected Final Salary to NPA - Total estimated final salary pension payable at NPA.

Automatic lump sum at NPA - This will be the same as your automatic lump sum shown in [Section Two](#).

If you want to obtain estimates for leaving on different dates, you can use the 'benefit projector tool' on 'my pension online'.

Section Six – Your Membership Details for Final Salary Benefits

This section shows membership before 1 April 2014. It will also show any membership built up before 1 April 2014 that you have transferred in. If you joined the scheme after 1 April 2014, this section will be blank. The membership total is used in the 'final salary benefits' calculation in [Section Four](#). To get the total membership, you can add all the days shown in 'periods of membership' or you can check your total membership on 'my pension online' which contains all the membership history we hold for you.

Annual Benefit Statement – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why isn't my current pension value the same as the contributions I have paid in? As a defined benefit scheme, your LGPS pension is calculated based on your salary and how long you've paid in. Yours and your employer's contributions are used to fund the pension benefits promised to you at retirement. You should consider that the annual pension is not a one-off amount. It would be paid each year to you in retirement for the rest of your life. The average length of time a pension is in payment for is 20 years. The amount you get back is therefore likely to be far higher than the amount you've paid in contributions.

Where are my employer's contributions shown on the statement? Your employer contributions are not shown on the statement. As with your contributions, employer's contributions are used to fund the pension benefit package you will receive at retirement and are not used as part of your pension calculation.

Why isn't all my membership showing in Section Six? Only membership before 1 April 2014 is shown in this section. Membership is not used to calculate pension after 1 April 2014. If you think the membership before 1 April 2014 is incorrect, you should contact your employer. Remember that for part-time workers, membership will be less than full time workers. If you work term time only, or seasonally, this will be recorded as part-time.

Is my transfer shown on the statement? If you've transferred in a previous pension, it will be shown in [Section Six](#). If your transfer in was not membership, but for a purchase of earned CARE pension between 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020, it will be shown in [Section Three](#) 'transfers in'. If you transferred in earned CARE pension in a previous scheme year, it will not feature as a separate amount on your ABS. It is included in the 'previous year closing balance' in [Section Three](#). You can check the value of your transfers on your 'my pension online' account. Transfers received after 31 March 2020, will not be on your ABS

I pay AVCs are they included in the ABS? No. If you pay AVCs you will receive a separate annual statement from your chosen in-house AVC provider.

I have paid APCs are they included in the ABS? Yes. APCs paid between 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020, are shown in 'additional pension bought' ([Section Three](#)). If you purchased APCs in previous years, these will be included in the 'balance carried forward' shown in [Section Three](#).

I have more than one employment, are all my pensions shown on this statement? No. You will receive an ABS for each. The payroll number shown on your payslip will match the one on the statement.

I have a LGPS pension(s) with a previous local authority, will this automatically transfer over? In most cases your previous LGPS pension(s) will not automatically transfer over without us writing to you first. If we have not been told about your previous membership, we will not know about it. You can complete a '[Membership Form](#)' to tell us about any previous LGPS pension(s). Please note: If you have been in your employment for longer than 12 months, you will need permission from your employer to transfer in any previous LGPS pension(s) in respect of service ending before 1 April 2014.

Can I transfer other pensions into my LGPS pension? You can investigate a transfer in if you are within 12 months of starting your employment. To begin the process, complete a '[Transfer Quote Request Pack](#)'. If you are outside of the 12 months, you will need your employer's permission first.

I purchased added years, are they shown on the ABS? Yes. Any added years purchased up until 31 March 2020 are included in the membership used to calculate your benefits in [Section Four](#).

Will COVID-19 impact on the value of my benefits? No. The LGPS is a defined benefit scheme. The pension is based on your salary and how long you've paid in, rather than any investment performance, so it will not be impacted by the current crisis. Visit our dedicated [COVID-19 Web Page](#) for more information.

Can I contribute less or more to the scheme? Yes. You can pay towards an APC or an AVC fund to increase your pension benefits. Visit the section on '[Increasing Your Benefits](#)' on our website. You also have the option of paying less by opting into the 50/50 section and paying half the contributions in return for half of the benefits. See the '[50/50 Election Form](#)' for more information.

When can I take my pension? You can take your pension at any age between 55 and 75. However, if you take your pension early (before your NPA), there will be reductions applied. Please see our web page: '[Early Retirement](#)' for further information. If you're thinking of retiring soon, you should read our '[Retirement Process Guide](#)', also available on our website.

Can I take/increase my lump sum when I retire? Yes, you will have the option to take or increase your lump sum to 25% of your total pension pot at retirement. You can use the benefit projector tool on 'my pension online' to estimate how much this will be.

Get the most from 'My Pension Online'.

'My pension online' (MPO) is the tool that puts you in control of your pension.

You can use MPO to:

- Run projections for retirement, deferred benefits and death grants
- Change or update a death grant nomination
- Update personal details, such as your address
- Access your letters from us, safely and securely
- View your pay information, APC information and transfer information
- Send us documents & contact us

There are some useful guides about how to use MPO in 'scheme documents'; however, if you need any assistance using MPO use the 'contact us' tool or email: mssregistration@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Contact

If you have any queries, contact: pensions@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Pensions and Investments Team, Buckinghamshire Council, Walton Street Offices, Walton Street, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP20 1UD

Website: www.buckscc.gov.uk/pensions

Phoneline: 01296 383755

(Monday-Thursday 9am-5.30pm and Friday 9am-5pm)

We welcome your feedback in improving our service. Email your comments to our dedicated inbox: pension.feedback@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Disclaimer: This leaflet is intended for information purposes only and does not cover every scenario or confer any contractual or statutory rights. In the event of a dispute the overriding legislation will prevail.