

Old Flames

Lancashire Firefighter pensioners newsletter 2018

your
pension
service

Welcome to the 2018 edition of Old Flames, the pension newsletter from Your Pension Service.

2017 was rather a busy year in the world of Firefighter Pensions. We processed over 35 retirements and paid over £17 million in pensions to pensioners throughout the world.

Yet again this year, more of you signed up to **My Pension Online** allowing you to securely access your pension record and to view your payslips and P60, amend your address and bank details on line.

If you are not yet signed up to this service please see the 'My Pension Online' section of the newsletter which gives step by step guidance on this.

As always, we welcome your feedback on any of the services we provide as well as what you would like to see in any future editions of Old Flames. Please use the details on the back page to leave us your views.

I do hope you enjoy this issue of Old Flames.

Many Thanks



Diane Lister
Head of Your Pension Service



Important information about your P60

What is a P60?

A P60 is a statement which is issued to taxpayers each year. The P60 contains information about how much you have earned and how much tax you have paid (if applicable). You will often know this information already from viewing your monthly pay slips.

When do I need a P60?

You may never need a paper version of your P60 as often just having the figures will suffice. You may need information from your P60 in the following scenarios:

- Filling in a self-assessment tax return
- Applying for a mortgage or tax credits
- Claiming a tax refund
- Queries with HMRC

If you are registered for **My Pension Online** then you can view your P60 at any time, meaning that there is no need for printing and storing things manually. Your online account acts as a virtual filing cabinet for your P60s and pay slips. You will find the P60 under the Member Documents option once you are logged in.

For details on how to register online please see the article **My Pension Online**.

2018 Pension Pay Dates

<i>Month</i>		<i>Pay Date 1992 Scheme</i>	<i>Pay Date 2006 Scheme</i>
April 2018	–	Tue 1 May	Mon 30 April
May 2018	–	Fri 1 June	Thu 31 May
June 2018	–	Fri 29 June	Fri 29 June
July 2018	–	Wed 1 August	Tues 31 July
August 2018	–	Fri 31 August	Fri 31 August
September 2018	–	Mon 1 October	Fri 28 September
October 2018	–	Thu 1 November	Wed 31 October
November 2018	–	Fri 30 November	Fri 30 November
December 2018	–	Mon 31 December	Mon 24 December
January 2019	–	Fri 1 February	Thu 31 January
February 2019	–	Fri 1 March	Thu 28 February
March 2019	–	Mon 1 April	Fri 29 March

Has anything changed recently?

If any of your personal information has changed recently then you may need to let us know. Have you moved to a new house, changed your email address or does your death grant nomination need amending? (See leaflet, what happens to your pension when you die at www.yourpensionservice.org.uk).

If you haven't already done so then please register for an activation key so that you can begin to enjoy the benefits of the **My Pension Online** system. You will find instructions on how to register in the article My Pension Online. This is now the main method of communication between us and you, therefore we do not want you to miss important information.

Once you are a member you can:

- Change your address
- Change your email address
- View and print your P60
- View your pay history
- Change the bank account into which pension payments are made from Your Pension Service (account must be in your name)
- View your nominated beneficiaries (where applicable)
- View factsheets and access forms
- Contact Your Pension Service

If you do not wish to use My Pension Online then you can still notify us of changes in writing, but please be aware that this can take longer.

My Pension Online

As highlighted above we now have a service where you can view all of your Pension details online.

If you would like to register for the service please follow the instructions below:

1. Go to the www.yourpensionservice.org.uk website
2. Click "**My Pension Login**" at the top right hand corner of the page
3. Select "**Lancashire Members Login**"
4. Click "**Sign Up**" to request an activation key for your online account
5. Complete the 4 fields on the registration form and then click "**Submit**"

An Activation key will be sent to your home address, once received you should revisit the website and follow instructions 1-4 above, but this time select "**Complete Your Registration**" and complete the relevant fields to finalise your account.

Once you are a fully registered Member then please check that your details are up to date. If you believe that your address is incorrect then we will not be able to get the activation key to you, so please contact the helpdesk (*details on final page*).

You will now have full access to all the features above. If you have any problems with your registration please contact the helpdesk (*details on final page*).

Benefits and Data Matching

Benefits

Please be aware that if you are claiming any type of benefit, for example housing benefit, you need to declare that you are drawing a pension. This is because its value may be taken into account. Failure to do so may be considered a form of fraud and may lead to an overpayment of benefits, so please notify your benefits office of any changes as soon as possible.

Please note that key payroll data and identifiers such as contact details may be provided to bodies responsible for auditing and administering public funds for the purposes of preventing and detecting fraud. For more details go to www.yourpensionservice.org.uk.

Death Notification

When a member of the scheme passes away it is vitally important that we are made aware as soon as possible. This avoids overpaying pension benefits.

To prevent this from happening you can inform the person who will be managing your affairs to notify ourselves at the earliest opportunity. This can be done by phone on 0300 323 0260.

Not only will this cease your pension before overpayments are made, but it will enable us to put in place any dependant's pensions which may arise, e.g. spouses pension.

Pensioners Abroad

If you are a pensioner residing abroad, each year we also require you to fill in a form for data matching for the same purposes as above. As you are no longer resident in the UK, if you were to pass away we would not be automatically informed, so the form is a method of confirmation.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

A new data protection regulation (GDPR) comes into effect on the 25th of May. This will not impact the way you receive your pension. However, it will change the way we hold and process your data. You will have more control over your personal data to ensure it is used for the express purpose it was collected for, LPP use your personal data to calculate and pay your benefits. The GDPR strengthens the existing Data Protection Act and ensures greater protection of your data. From time to time we will share your personal data with third parties, including our contractors, advisors, government and law enforcement agencies and insurers in order to comply with our obligations under law, and in connection with the provision of services that help us carry out our duties, rights and discretions in relation to the Scheme. These organisations are listed in the full Privacy Notice which will be available from the 25th of May on the www.yourpensionservice.org.uk website.

Pensions increases

The Government have confirmed that the annual inflationary increase to pensions*, payable from April 2018 is 3%, based on the consumer price index (CPI) over the 12 months to the previous September.

**Increases are applied providing you are at least age 55 or you retired on ill health. If you retired mid-year, then you will receive a pro rata increase.*

GMP and Pension increases

Pension increase when you attain State Pension Age

Your Firefighter Pension Scheme is increased in line with inflation each April.

If you joined before 6 April 2016, up to that date, you were contracted out of the State Additional Pension whilst you were paying into the Firefighter Pension Scheme. This means during that period, you paid lower National Insurance contributions and did not build up Additional State Pension benefits. Instead, under the contracting out rules, the Firefighter Pension Scheme will pay you a pension which is at least the same as you would have received had you not been contracted out (and is usually much greater).

How this protection worked changed from 6 April 1997. For service before then, the Scheme had to pay a minimum amount of pension (known as the Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP)). Please note that we pay the GMP element as part of your Firefighter Pension (and not in addition to it).

You stopped building up GMP from 6 April 1997. From this date, schemes, instead of guaranteeing to pay a minimum amount of pension, had to provide scheme benefits that are broadly equivalent to or are better than a set of criteria set by government. The GMP becomes important when you reach State Pension Age.

From the April following reaching State Pension Age the government will share the cost of inflation proofing the GMP element of your pension. You will receive the government's share in your State pension. We will share the cost as follows:

- 1) Increases on your GMP element built up before 6 April 1988 - paid by the government, together with your State Pension;
- 2) Increases up to the first 3% on your GMP element built up after 5 April 1988 - paid by Firefighter Pension Scheme;
- 3) Increases in excess of 3% on your GMP element built up after 5 April 1988 - paid by the government, together with your State Pension.

This means that the amount of pension, including GMP, is fully increased, but you will receive the increases on the GMP element from two places, your Firefighter Pension and State Pension.

Hopefully the example below will explain this a little more clearly

J Smith's GMP is applied at State Pension Age so the pension is broken down into the following sections:

a) Basic Pension	= £500.00 per month
b) GMP up to 5 April 1988	= £200.00 per month
c) GMP from 6 April 1988	= £100.00 per month
Total pension in payment	= £800.00 per month

An example of total pension increase payable from April is 3%, so increases are applied to the above pension:

a) Basic Pension plus the full increase of 3%	= £515.00 per month
b) GMP up to 5 April 1988 with no increase (as 1 above)	= £200.00 per month
c) GMP from 6 April 1988 plus increase limited to 3% (as 2 above)	= £103.00 per month
Total pension in payment	= £818.00 per month

Full increases on (b) and any additional % on (c) will be paid by the government in your state pension.

For people who attain their State Pension age on or after 6 April 2016, the State Pension has changed to a single-tier pension. As a consequence of this, the government are no longer able to share the cost of inflation proofing the GMP element. The government are currently considering various options as to how to proceed in this area (please see [link](#)). As an interim solution, members who attain their State Pension age in the period from 6 April 2016 and 5 April 2021 (inclusive) will receive the full increases on the GMP element in their Firefighter Pension.

Tax Allowances

Each year everybody is allowed a certain amount of income, tax free. There are various tax allowances, but for most the only one which applies is a personal allowance.

Previously there have been differing personal allowances for people dependant on their date of birth, however the Finance Bill 2015 removed these factors and there is now a single personal allowance regardless of the date they were born.

For the year 2018/19 the allowance will be £11,850 and anything earned over this amount (up to £46,350) from all income, including pension benefits will be taxed at a rate of 20%.

Income between £46,351 and £150,000 will be taxed at 40%. Income above £150,001 will be taxed at 45%. Please note that your personal allowance will reduce by £1 for every £2 you earn over £100,000. So by the time you earn £123,700, you'll pay income tax on everything you earn and get no personal tax-free allowance.

Once the tax man works out your allowance a notification of coding will be issued to make sure the right amount of tax is taken from your income.

Lifetime Allowance

The maximum limit of pension benefits that can be paid is known as the lifetime allowance. The lifetime allowance is £1.03 million from the 6 April 2018.

The amount of Lifetime Allowance that you have used in respect of your scheme membership can be seen on your P60 which can be accessed by signing up to the "My Pension Online" service. More information is also available on our website.

Further Allowances

There are a number of other allowances that may apply, such as blind person's allowance or married couple allowance. These don't apply to all so if you feel they may be applicable to yourself please view the tax office website or contact them directly.

Contact details
HM Revenue and Customs
Tel: **0300 200 3300**
Web: **www.hmrc.gov.uk**

Please have your national insurance number to hand.

Why do I pay tax on my pension? The taxman looks at all types of income, pensions, wages, and so on. If you exceed your allowance then you pay tax!

Do I have to do anything with my notice of coding? No, it's just the taxman notifying you of the change and we will receive a notice too.

I think my code is wrong, what should I do? Please don't call us, we are not allowed to adjust your tax code. You need to contact HMRC directly as only they can change it.

Perks of the Job

BENEFITS

Did you know as an ex-member of the service you have access to a wide range of exclusive benefits? These vary from high street discount to money off theatre breaks. For more information and to start saving please visit www.rewardsforrescue.co.uk

Harris Museum, Art Gallery & Library



If you haven't been to Preston's fabulous free museum, art gallery and library recently (or ever!), Spring 2018 is the perfect time to give it a try. 300,000 visitors a year can't be wrong!

Set in a stunning Grade I listed Victorian building right in the centre of the city, the Harris offers exciting, ambitious, high-profile exhibitions showcasing the Harris' collections of British fine art, fashion, ceramics, glass and textiles as well as contemporary shows by local, national and internationally renowned artists. You can also find out what makes Preston special in our Discover Preston gallery, from evidence of the earliest human occupation in the North West to Roman and Viking settlers as well as more recent Prestonians who had a global impact such as Richard Arkwright and Sir Tom Finney. In the library you can find thousands of books to read for pleasure and expand your mind, and our 19th century reading room is a perfect spot to browse our collection of local history materials.

Exhibitions are accompanied by events for all ages, including artist led tours, school holiday activities, talks, music performances and young people led art and history projects.

We also offer a range of reading groups, support for community organisations and creative activities like knit and natter. Take a break with a coffee, sandwich, soup or pastry in our brand new Bean Good Coffee Shop, which also offers vegetarian, gluten-free and kids' options, and find a gift in our gallery shop which stocks unique artist made work, cards and Preston souvenirs.

This spring and summer you can enjoy exhibitions from Preston's own Turner Prize winner, Lubaina Himid, a dreamy French Impressionist painting loaned from the Courtauld Gallery, and even a bit of Comics mayhem in our summer family show. There really is something to thrill all ages.

Find out more at www.harrismuseum.org.uk

Members of the 2006 Scheme, are you single and living with your partner?

If so, the Firefighter Pension Scheme includes survivor pensions for co-habiting partners.

To be able to nominate your partner for a survivor pension in the event of your death, **all of the following conditions must have applied to both you and your nominated co-habiting partner for a continuous period of at least 2 years on the date you both sign the nomination form.**

- Both you and your nominated co-habiting partner are, and have been, free to marry each other or enter into a civil partnership with each other, and
- You and your nominated co-habiting partner have been living together as if you were husband and wife, or civil partners, and
- Neither you or your nominated co-habiting partner have been living with someone else as if you/they were husband and wife or civil partners, and
- Either your nominated co-habiting partner is financially dependent on you or you are financially interdependent on each other.

If you qualify, please complete a nomination form. This can be found at www.yourpensionservice.org.uk

Members of the 2015 Scheme

For deaths occurring from 1 April 2015, the condition that you must have nominated your cohabiting partner for them to be eligible to receive a survivor pension no longer applies. Nonetheless, to speed up any process after your death, you may tell us about your cohabiting partner by completing the nomination form and returning it to the address shown on the form. The form can be found at www.yourpensionservice.org.uk

Lump Sum Death Grant (2006 & 2015 Scheme)

If you die after retirement but before having received at least five years of pension instalments, the balance of the instalments you have not received will be converted to a lump sum. Like a death grant, it would be paid to the person or persons that the Fire and Rescue Authority, at their discretion, believe to be appropriate recipients. By completing the nomination form you would make your wishes known to the Authority in respect of this payment. To check your nomination visit [My Pension Online](#). The relevant form is also available to download from our website.

Our Contact Details

Pensions Helpdesk

 Tel: **0300 323 0260**

 E-mail: askpensions@localpensionspartnership.org.uk

 Web: www.yourpensionservice.org.uk

Useful Contacts

NARF National Association of Retired Firefighters

 Tel: **0121 380 6059 / 07831 520 049**

Fax: **01463 811 775**

 E-mail: retired.firefighters@wmfs.net

 Web: www.narfire.org.uk

Pensions Service - (State Pension Enquiries)

 Tel: **0345 60 60 625**


 Web: www.thepensionservice.gov.uk

Feedback

As always, we welcome your feedback on any of the services we deliver as well as what you would like to see in future editions of Old Flames. Why not take part in our survey by completing the [Your Pension Service Survey](#)


Retired Members Association (RMA)

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