

October 2022

Member News



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Welcome from the Trustee

This newsletter brings you up to date with everything that's happening with the Fund and what it means for you.

We've welcomed two new trustees, Melanie Cusack and Lionel Sampson. We want to thank the last team – Anna Forshamn, Andy Gordon, Simon 'Jebb' Kitchen and Paul Norris – for their contributions over the last year.

In the wider pensions world, the government is raising the normal minimum pension age. Many members will be affected by this, so we're offering help to plan your retirement with our Pension Decision Service.

Sadly, pensions scams are on the rise. So we give you advice on how to stay safe and set out what we're doing to protect your benefits.

We also run through how to trace any old pensions, share how you can join us on our online journey and we bring good financial news: the money in the Fund has increased.



Pi Consulting Trustee Services Limited (PTS) represented by John Oldland, Chair of MNRPF

Meet your trustees

The trustee board is now made up of a smaller team of three permanent independent trustees.



John Oldland

John represents the Chair of MNRPF, PTS. He has over 35 years' experience as a professional trustee and has been involved in a variety of complex cases. Over the last few years, he's worked strategically to help manage the Fund.



Melanie Cusack

Melanie has almost 30 years' experience in the UK pensions industry. She started her career as a pensions actuary and in 2009 moved to independent trusteeship. She's also a member of several pensions groups and is a regular judge of the Pensions Age Awards.



Lionel Sampson

Lionel is a professional pension trustee with around 25 years' experience, including working with one of the UK's largest schemes, Royal Mail. He's been a union official for 36 years and is now working as a Senior Policy Advisor.

Update on our projects

We're making the Fund even more secure

Every pension scheme has liabilities, which are the amount the scheme needs to pay members' benefits for the rest of their lives. As members are living longer, they need to be paid for longer so the liabilities go up. In the last year, we've worked on our investment strategy so it doesn't affect the money in the Fund.

We're checking our members' data

We want to be as confident as possible that all the data we hold is correct. This includes how members have built up their benefits and how the Fund has paid these benefits.

We're working with our advisers to investigate how changes in laws and practices have affected the Scheme rules and how the Scheme rules have been administered. We will be in touch soon with our results.



Some members will receive payments after the Ill Health Early Retirement settlement

The settlement was approved at a court hearing on 24 February 2022. Since then, we've been working to implement the settlement. Members who already get an ill-health pension and who qualify will receive a pension increase and/or a lump-sum payment.

If you retired in ill health but did not receive an ill-health pension, you may qualify for a payment, but the process will take a bit more time. To find out how to make a claim, go to mnrpf.co.uk/latest-news.php

To find out more on the progress of the settlement, please read the letter enclosed with this newsletter.



We'll tell you about your pension increases online

At the moment if you're a pensioner member, we write to you every year about pension increases. We're considering how we can put this information online instead and will be in touch when we've made a decision.

How we measure inflation is changing

The government is changing the way we measure inflation. Right now, we use the Retail Prices Index (RPI). From 2030, we'll use the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH). If you're a pensioner member, your pension increases could be lower from 2030. In light of this change, we are also monitoring and reviewing the investment strategy.

For more MNRPF news, go to mnrpf.co.uk/latest-news.php

The government is raising the normal minimum pension age from 55 to 57

This means that if your 57th birthday is on or after 6 April 2028 you will need to be at least 57 before you can take your pension.

If you're not yet taking your pension and you're thinking of retiring early, contact Mercer. You can get in touch with Mercer using the details on the back cover.

The State Pension age is also increasing and will reach 67 by 2028. To check your State Pension age, visit gov.uk/state-pension-age

Get help planning for your retirement

If you're over 55, you can use our Pension Decision Service to talk to the personal retirement relationship team and start planning for your future now. They'll explain your options and help you plan for the lifestyle you want to live in retirement.

To make an appointment, contact Mercer using the details on the back cover.

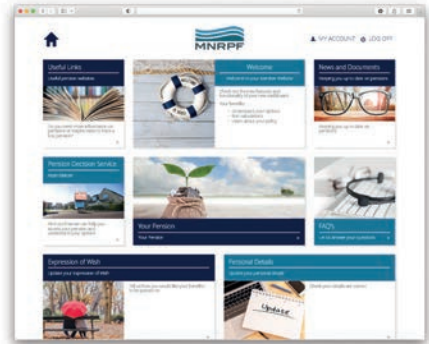
Talk to an adviser

Before you make any big decisions, it's important to get advice for your specific personal situation. The best way to do this is with a regulated and impartial adviser. You can find one near you by going to moneyhelper.org.uk and searching for 'Find a retirement adviser' or by phoning **0800 011 3797**

Join 3,000 members who get pension information online

By the end of this year, the Trustee intends to send the most general Fund communications electronically. It's better for the planet, gives you access to information wherever you are and makes it easier to stay in touch if you move home.

If you've received a flyer with this newsletter, it serves as your last notice of this change. To get general Fund information in future, you'll need to sign up to our online service, BenPal.



If you did not get a flyer, you'll be able to access BenPal next year. We'll write to you soon to tell you how to sign up.

Keep track of your pensions

If you've had more than one job in your career, you might be a member of more than one workplace pension scheme. Research shows that 1.6 million pensions have been lost or forgotten, with an average value of £23,125 per owner.

How to trace a lost pension

The government offers a free service to help you find lost pensions. You can find contact details for your own workplace or personal pension scheme or someone else's scheme if you have their permission. To start, go to **gov.uk/ ind-pension-contact-details** or phone the Pension Tracing Service on **0800 731 0193**

Protect yourself against pension scams

Pension scams are at an all-time high. Scammers can be convincing and knowledgeable, with websites and brochures that look like the real thing. So anyone is susceptible, whether they're building up their pension or about to take it for retirement.

STAY SAFE

- 1 Reject offers that come out of the blue** – scammers often send unannounced emails and texts, and make cold calls. This is illegal, and is a likely sign of a scam.
- 2 Do not let anyone pressure you** – scammers often urge you to hand over personal details or 'act fast or miss out'. They know that the more time you have to think, the more likely you are to realise you're being conned.
- 3 Check that any company you talk to is authorised** by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) at **register.fca.org.uk** or on **0800 111 6768**
- 4 Get impartial advice before making any decisions** – go to **moneyhelper.org.uk** for trusted information about transferring your benefits. And to find an independent retirement adviser.
- 5 Get help if you think you're being scammed** – if you've been contacted by someone who could be a scammer, tell us immediately. You can also report them to the police at **actionfraud.police.uk**



How we're protecting you against scams

It's a common tactic for scammers to tell people that they're better off transferring their benefits into a pension scheme that offers 'more flexibility' or 'higher returns'. In fact, the victim ends up transferring their benefits into these criminals' pockets.

We're doing extra checks on transfers

Last year, the government introduced new statutory regulations for when you transfer your benefits into a new pension arrangement. Now, all pension schemes have an even more rigorous process than before to protect you from scams. If you ask us to transfer your benefits, the process will involve us spending a bit more time checking where the money is going.

It might take a bit longer to transfer your benefits out of the Fund if you need to. But it's worth the wait to keep your money safe.

Our money update

Our funding level has improved

Every year our actuary analyses the money in the Fund.

They work out the:

- **assets** – how much money the scheme has
- **liabilities** – the estimated amount we need to pay members' benefits, now and for the rest of their lives
- **funding level** – how much money the scheme has compared to how much it needs, shown as a percentage

Here's how the money in the Fund has changed over the past year:

	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
Assets	£1.25 billion	£1.20 billion
Liabilities	£1.31 billion	£1.22 billion
Shortfall	£56 million	£19 million
Funding level	96%	98%



Here's how our money changed

Our finances show that the Fund is secure and is being well managed by the Trustee. Our funding level has gone up: as of 31 March 2022 it stands at 98%. We're not quite fully funded, but pension schemes rarely are, and we're nearly there. This increase is mainly because the Employers have contributed some money to the Fund. This is part of a long-term plan to take the Fund out of a deficit.

One of the ways the Fund invests is by lending money to the government. These 'government bonds' are considered one of the most secure places to put money. We also use them to calculate our assets and liabilities.

Last year, the value of bonds went down. This meant our liabilities and assets went down as well. The Trustee invests in bonds this way so that the assets don't go down more than the liabilities. They do this to protect the funding level.

We have not given any money to the Employers

There are some things we need to tell you by law. One of them is whether any money from the Fund has been paid to the Employers. We can reassure you that this hasn't happened.

What would happen if the Fund ceased to exist?

By law, we are also required to calculate certain figures and tell you about them. One of those things is what would happen if the Fund were to wind up. Winding up a pension scheme means it ceases to exist.

If the Fund had started winding up on 31 March 2022, we would have had to use the money to buy a policy from an insurance company and these can be expensive. This would mean we'd need more money. So the Fund's actuary estimated we would have had 91% of the money we needed.

However, we're not actually winding up. So our funding level is still 98% as of 31 March 2022.

How to contact us

If you have any questions about your pension, contact our administration team, Mercer.

Phone

01372 200 385

Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.30pm
(closed on bank holidays)

Online

contact.mercer.com

Write to

MNRPF
Mercer Limited
Maclaren House
Talbot Road
Stretford
Manchester M32 0FP

To help Mercer find your records quickly, please give your membership number or National Insurance number when you call or write.

If you want to learn more about your pension, such as how and when you can take your benefits or how to transfer out of the Fund, head to our website at **mnrpf.co.uk**

