

# at ease

Haringey Pension Fund — Keeping people in touch

**At Ease is the bulletin to keep you informed about matters affecting the Local Government Pension Scheme.**

## **Pension Payslips**

Payslips are issued if your net pay changes by plus or minus £1 in any month. A payslip is always sent to you in April and May so that you can see the affect that pensions increase and any tax adjustment has on your pension. This only applies to pensioner members resident in the UK.

## **Online Pension Payslips**

Online pension payslips are coming later this year. You will be able to access via a computer, tablet, or smartphone copies of your pension payslip and also view this years atease! More details and information to follow.

## **Changing your home address or Bank Account**

If you change your address or bank account, please let us know in writing and in good time. Notice received after the 15th of the month may be too late for the payroll deadline. For example a notice of change received after the 15th July might not be amended on payroll until August.

Payslips are not redirected by the Royal Mail, instead they are returned to the Council. Even if you are moving away temporarily, and you have asked the Post Office to redirect your mail, then you should also inform the Pensions Team. If you tell us when you are returning to your permanent address, we will continue pension payments until your expected return.

*If payslips are returned to us, your pension payments will be suspended and the payments cannot then be released until the next available payroll run.*

## **Overseas Pensions Payments**

To avoid delays in payment of a death grant or survivor pension, the Council will need to be provided with a death certificate. For pensioners living abroad this means that the next of kin or personal representative must register a death locally and in addition, it should be registered with the British Consul. By doing this, a record of a death will be kept here in the U.K.

If your pension is being paid to you abroad, you will need to tell the Pension Team of any changes to your bank account details in good time. If your payment is returned by the receiving bank, a penalty charge may be made against the Council. This charge will then be recovered from you.

## **Pension Increases (Review) Order 2017 from 10th April 2017**

Pensioners who have been retired, before age 55, for reasons other than ill health will not receive any increase on their pension until age 55.

Pensioners other than teachers, who have retired from Local Government since 1978 and have attained State retirement age, may have a "Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP)" included in their pension. This may consist of a "Pre 1988 GMP" and/or a "Post 1988 GMP". The pension increase on the "Pre 1988 GMP" will be paid by the State together with the State retirement pension. The pension increase on the "Post 1988 GMP" will be 1% from 10th April 2017.

Pensioners who retired on or before 25th April 2016 receive a 1% increase and pensioners who retired on or after 26th April 2016 receive a proportioned amount dependant upon the date of retirement. Details are as follows:

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Before 25 <sup>th</sup> April 2016                       | 1.00% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> April 2016 to 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2016 | 0.92% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> May 2016 to 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2016  | 0.83% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 to 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2016 | 0.75% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> July 2016 to 25 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2016  | 0.67% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2016 to 25 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2016  | 0.58% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2016 to 25 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2016  | 0.50% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2016 to 25 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2016   | 0.42% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2016 to 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2016   | 0.33% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2016 to 25 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2017   | 0.25% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2017 to 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2017   | 0.17% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2017 to 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2017 | 0.08% |

**Haringey**  
LONDON

[www.haringey.gov.uk](http://www.haringey.gov.uk)

# The great bank account switch

**Stuck in a bank account with high fees or poor customer service?  
Switch! It's much easier than it used to be and you could grab a bonus.**

There was a time when you chose your bank and then stayed with it for years. The thought of switching to another provider would seem more trouble than it was worth, manually rearranging all those standing orders and direct debits, and holding your breath for a month to check that they'd all gone through. Get it wrong and you could rack up a whole load of bank charges. All that stress and bother, no wonder we just stayed put.

However in the last three years things have completely transformed.

Since 2013 the banking industry in the UK has committed to a new system that makes switching much quicker and easier than it used to be. It's called 'seven-day switching' and it means your new bank takes on the responsibility of making your switch instead of you.

This takes the onus off you and makes the whole process much smoother and more manageable now that the banks are working for you rather than asking you to do all the work.

Of most interest, in this easy-switching environment, the banks are keen to attract those who want to switch. That's meant a beauty parade from the financial sector with banks introducing switching bonuses specifically to attract those wanting to change provider.

Such bonuses are either one-off welcome payments (at time of writing a bonus of £150 is available from one establishment), or higher monthly interest rates for those in credit. In addition there's a range of ongoing benefits for those who do switch to keep them locked into their new bank.

## How switching works

It's a very simple process. All you do is open an account at a bank that is signed up to the system (most in the UK are) and then use its switching service to move your account from your current provider to the new one. It deals with all the hard work of ensuring your existing payments in and out are honoured, and it then

closes your old account – and all in just seven days.

Banks recommend that people should avoid picking a switch date close to any incoming / outgoing payments. However, if there are any errors, and you do incur charges, then you have the reassurance that you will be refunded the full amount.

However, the new bank can't handle everything. You may have to intervene if you have re-occurring payments on your bank debit or credit card. These are known as 'continuous payment authorities' and are usually for subscriptions, monthly fees, etc where you've had to give your long card number to a supplier. Just ask your new bank on how to best handle these.

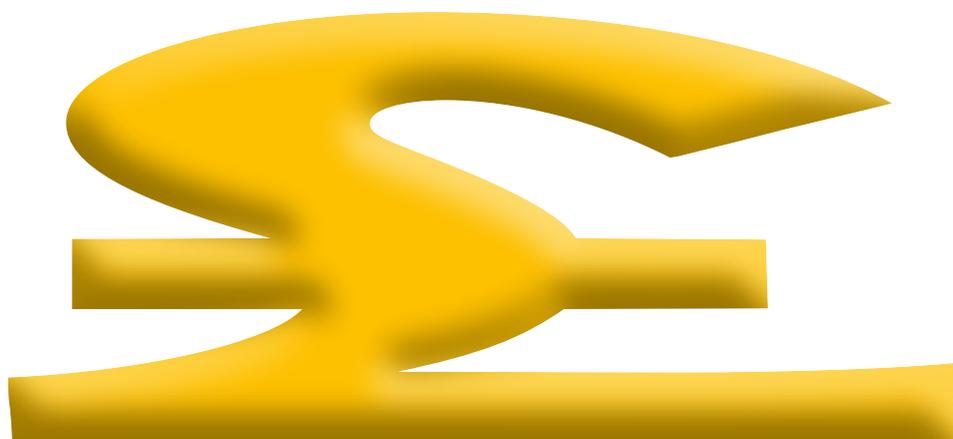
Most banks are signed up to the seven day switching system although not all building societies have joined. If you switch to one that isn't in the scheme then not only do you have to make all the transfers yourself but you'll not qualify for any of these switching bonuses either.

## Which bank?

Most of the best deals require you to 'pay in' a specific monthly amount to qualify, hoping to attract those in employment or with regular income such as paying in rent from tenants. If you can make these payments, then you have the pick of what's on offer.

However there are some that don't require this commitment and offer such benefits as a gift card to redeem at a major retailer, or attractive interest / cashback on purchases (as at the time of writing).

The offers on the table vary, and the type of account and bonus that works best for you will depend on what you need from your account. Check what's on offer at [www.MoneySavingExpert.com](http://www.MoneySavingExpert.com) which has a guide to switching and the Best Buys on offer.



# Sleep - the gift of the GABA

If you're having trouble sleeping, there's no need to visit the doctor for sleeping pills. Try this natural prescription instead.

The secret to a good night's sleep is already in your brain. It's an amino acid that is the body's natural sleeping potion. Called Gamma Aminobutyric Acid (GABA), it calms nerve activity in your brain, which leads to feelings of relaxation.

If you can't sleep, chances are your GABA levels are not what they should be.

Knowing this fact has helped pharmaceutical companies create a multi-billion pound industry in anti-anxiety medications and sleeping pills. Their products such as Xanax and Valium work by giving you an artificial GABA boost to help you relax and sleep.

However would you choose to pop a sleeping pill with all its potential side effects if you could instead find a more natural way to boost your GABA levels and overcome the problem yourself? There are four things to try:

## With natural supplements

Some natural sedative herbs, such as valerian, increase your levels of GABA. Alternatively there are GABA supplements on offer including a natural form made via fermentation with *Lactobacillus hilgardii*, a beneficial bacteria also used to make the traditional Korean vegetable dish kimchi. Recent research shows that 100mg of this natural GABA helped

people fall asleep faster, gave them longer quality sleep time and helped them wake up feeling more energized in the morning.

## With diet

You don't find GABA in foods. However certain foods contain the next best thing - glutamate/ glutamic acid - which is the substance that your body uses to produce its own GABA. So if you want high GABA levels, start eating a glutamate-rich diet.

Foods to focus on are protein-rich grass-fed meat, pastured eggs and poultry, grass-fed cheese and wild-caught fish, along with seaweed, ripe tomatoes and mushrooms. Fermented vegetables and kefir are also packed full of probiotic bacteria that boost GABA levels. In one study the probiotic *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* was found to be particularly beneficial.

Vitamin B6 plays a part. If you are deficient then you are more likely to have reduced GABA levels. So boost your B6 with salmon, grass-fed beef, pastured chicken, and chickpeas. Green tea is also good, containing L-theanine, an amino acid that increases your GABA levels and boosts serotonin, dopamine and alpha brainwave activity which all helps to induce feelings of relaxation.

## With exercise

You can encourage a good night's sleep through a good day's exercise. Regular movement is one of the best cures for insomnia because experts think it boosts natural GABA levels.

## With environment

You can't stimulate GABA levels directly through your environment. However you can give this sleep-time amino acid the best chance of working if you create a peaceful backdrop to a good night's rest.

Classic ways to do this are to emphasise the difference between day and night lighting: your brain recognises the difference and reacts accordingly, so get into bright sunlight regularly in the day, and at night sleep in complete darkness to maximize the prompts to your system.

In addition for the last hour before bed avoid TV, smart phones or computers as the blue light they emit is thought to stop your brain producing sleep-inducing melatonin. The free app F.lux automatically dims your monitor or screens, which helps, or consider blue-light-blocking glasses.

Source: [www.Mercola.com](http://www.Mercola.com)



## Contact and keeping us informed of changes to your circumstances

### Visits To The Pensions Team

We regret that we are unable to offer individual face to face appointments except in exceptional circumstances. You should in the first instance contact us via one of the options shown in the Making Contact box. If an appointment is necessary, a member of The Pension Team will make arrangements with you to visit the office

### Vacancy - Haringey Pension Committee and Board

There is a vacancy to represent employees and pensioners on Haringey Pension Committee and Board. The Committee and Board monitors the fund's administration, investments and standards of governance amongst other issues. Full details and an application form are available on the Council's web site at the below web address.

[www.haringeypensionfund.co.uk](http://www.haringeypensionfund.co.uk)

### National Fraud Initiative

Under NFI rules, Haringey provides details of occupational pensioners to the Cabinet Office, in order that they can compare them with information provided by other organisations to ensure that:

- No pensions are being paid to anyone who is deceased
- Occupational pension income is being declared by anyone who is claiming housing benefit
- Anyone who starts work again after their retirement remains eligible to receive their pension

Any indication of possible fraud is investigated. All data is used in accordance with Data Protection and Human Rights legislation. Any investigation is conducted in accordance with all relevant statutory and professional standards.

Previously, NFI was restricted to

the public sector, but private sector organisations and especially private sector pension providers, have been requesting that they be included in future data matching exercises.

If you become re-employed in local government or in an employment covered by the Local Government Pension Scheme you are required by law to contact the pension section in writing so that we can make sure that you receive the correct pension.

Similar rules apply to former Teachers who must contact the Teachers Pensions Agency.

If you are in receipt of Housing Benefits and your financial circumstances change, please make sure that you contact your Housing Benefits Department as soon as possible.

### Re-Employment

If you return to Local Government or to employment under the Local Government Pension Scheme, then you are required by law to notify the Council of the details. Notification must be in writing to the address shown in the Making Contact Box below

### Legislation

Legislation updates amending the LGPS can be viewed on [www.haringeypensionfund.co.uk](http://www.haringeypensionfund.co.uk)

#### Pension Payroll Payment Dates (April 2017 to March 2018)

|                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2017     | 27 <sup>th</sup> October 2017  |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> May 2017       | 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2017 |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2017      | 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2017 |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> July 2017      | 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2018  |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> August 2017    | 27 <sup>th</sup> February 2018 |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2017 | 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2018    |



### Pension scams. Don't get stung.

As you are in receipt of your pension the transfer out of your pension to another scheme is not allowed.

Pension scams are on the increase in the UK with offers such as 'one-off pension investments', 'pension loans' or 'upfront cash' all being used to attract savers.

For most people, these offers will be bogus and those who take part will probably lose their pension savings and may be subject to tax charges for transferring out and making an 'unauthorised payment'.

The Pensions Regulator has published new guidance to raise awareness of pension scams. You can access this at:

[www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/pension-scams](http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/pension-scams)

# Making Contact

You can contact the Pensions Team from 9.00am to 4.45pm Monday to Friday.

#### Telephone

020 8489 1700

#### Email

[pensions.mailbox@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:pensions.mailbox@haringey.gov.uk)

#### Postal address

The Pensions Team  
Haringey Council  
Alexandra House  
10 Station Road  
London N22 7TR

- Pension Web Page  
[www.haringeypensionfund.co.uk](http://www.haringeypensionfund.co.uk)
- HMRC (Tax Queries)  
**0300 200 3300** (Ref 120/B31)
- Teachers Pensions Agency  
**0345 606 6166**
- Pensions Service (DWP)  
**0800 99 1234**

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