

# Bedfordshire Pension Fund

## Request to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

Do not complete this form if you are a new employee and you wish to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) as, provided you have a contract of more than three months' duration and are under age 75, pension contributions will be deducted automatically.

If you have a contract which is for less than three months then you will need to complete this form in order to join the scheme.

If you are an employee who has previously opted out of the scheme and you now wish to join, you will need to complete this form.

If you previously opted out of the LGPS on or after 11 April 2015, you may not be able to combine previous LGPS pension benefits with your new pension account.

This form must be printed off, completed in black or blue ink and signed before sending to:

Transactions Team, Bedfordshire Pension Fund, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AP

Alternatively, you can email a scanned copy of the completed form to [pensions@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:pensions@bedford.gov.uk)

**Please tick either A or B, and then fill in your personal details and sign the form.**

Please tick

**A – existing employees:** I am already employed and now wish to join the LGPS.

**B – new employees:** My contract is for less than three months and I wish to join the LGPS.

Your details	
Full name:	
National Insurance number:	Date of birth:
Email address:	
Home address:	
Employer and Job Title:	
Date started this job:	Payroll Number (if known):
Signed:	Date:

Bedfordshire Pension Fund will tell your employer that you want to join the scheme. Your employer will start taking pension contributions from your pay and will send a Pensions Service Record form to Bedfordshire Pension Fund to confirm that you have joined the scheme.

If you have any previous pension rights, you will need to complete the 'Previous Pension Benefits' form in the starter pack that Bedfordshire Pension Fund will send you once you have joined the scheme. The Pension Fund will then send you more information about any transfer of previous pension benefits to the LGPS. **Please read the attached notes carefully.**

# Bedfordshire Pension Fund

## Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

### Information for employees

You have an important decision to make. Please read this leaflet carefully.

The Local Government Pension Scheme exists for the benefit of local government employees and provides a range of benefits which include:

- a monthly pension at retirement age and an option to exchange some of your annual pension for a lump sum amount
- benefits in the event of retirement due to ill health
- a lump sum if you die before retirement
- widows', widowers', civil partners', eligible cohabiting partners' and children's pensions

If you are a new employee and have a contract of more than 3 months' duration, you will automatically become a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme. If you do not have a contract of more than 3 months then you will need to opt to join the scheme. There is no lower age limit required to become a member and local government employees up to age 75 can join.

### About the Scheme

The scheme is administered by Bedford Borough Council under the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations. Contributions are deducted from your pay. You will pay between 5.5% and 12.5% of your pay. Your contribution rate is decided by how much you are paid. The higher your pay, the higher your contribution rate will be. Tax payers will benefit by paying less tax.

Your employer pays a sum sufficient to maintain the pension fund at a level to meet all benefits plus the cost of pensions increases and a guarantee that it will always be paid.

### Benefits of the Scheme

For each year that you are in the scheme, a pension equal to a 49th of your pensionable pay in that year will be added to your pension account. Inflation increases will be added to ensure that your pension account keeps up with the cost of living.

When you retire you will have the option to exchange some of the annual pension for a lump sum amount. After your pension has gone into payment it will still be protected against inflation and will increase in line with cost of living increases.

The scheme has additional benefits such as a lump sum death grant of three times actual pensionable pay if a member dies in service and ill health retirement pensions where the level of benefits paid is dependent on the nature of the ill health and whether the member is likely to return to employment at some point before retirement age.

Members' families are also protected. A widow, widower, eligible cohabiting partner or civil partner will receive a pension. There is also protection for dependent children.

### If you leave the Scheme

If your membership of the LGPS is less than two years it may be possible to have a refund of your contributions. However, it may not be possible to have a refund if you have previous LGPS membership or if you have transferred other pension benefits into the LGPS.

If your membership is two years or more, your benefits will be preserved in the Local Government Pension Scheme until retirement age.

Regardless of your length of membership, you have the option to transfer your benefits to another local authority scheme, occupational pension scheme, personal pension scheme or stakeholder scheme. However, if you opt out of the LGPS and are not entitled to a refund of contributions and you subsequently re-join the scheme (either by opting in or being put back into the scheme by your employer under Auto Enrolment rules or by joining the scheme in respect of a new employment) you will not have the option to combine your pension accounts.

There are alternative options to the LGPS which include stakeholder pensions. Please seek independent financial advice if you wish to consider any other option.

If you have any queries about this form please contact Bedfordshire Pension Fund on 01234 276912.