

PLANNING FOR RETIREMENT THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

April 2026

This guide is designed to help you think about your DC pension and retirement planning at different stages leading up to your retirement. It is not financial advice, but it can help you prepare and know where to get financial support.

Whether retirement is a long way off or fast approaching, we are here to help you make informed decisions about your pension.

10 YEARS BEFORE RETIREMENT

This is a good time to start planning and checking that you are on track.

Things to think about:

- **When** would you like to retire?
- **How** much income might you need in retirement?
- **Are** you paying enough into your pension?
- **Do** you have other savings or pensions?

Actions you should take:

- Check your Baptist Pension Scheme (BPS) account on **Broadstone Engage Members**: engage-members.broadstone.co.uk
- Keep your **personal details** up to date via Broadstone Engage Members.
- Complete - or review and update - your **Expression of Wish** form. Your Expression of Wish form is an important part of your pension planning. Whilst the Trustees have discretion to decide which beneficiaries will receive any benefits that are payable from

the Scheme should you die, your wishes will be considered first. Failure to complete an Expression of Wish form can therefore cause delays in paying benefits and additional stress for loved ones at a difficult time.

- Visit retirementlivingstandards.org.uk to help you plan for retirement. The **Retirement Living Standards** have been developed, using academic research, to help individuals picture what kind of lifestyle they could have in retirement and the costs involved (although please note that they do not take into account housing costs, such as a mortgage or rent).
- Consider increasing your pension contributions if you can afford to. The BPS allows members to put more of their salary each month into their pension if they choose to – these extra payments are called **Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs)**.
- Check your **State pension** forecast and trace other pension pots.
 - You can check your state pension forecast on the Government website gov.uk/check-state-pension.
 - You can trace previous company pensions on the Government website findpensioncontacts.service.gov.uk

5 YEARS BEFORE RETIREMENT

Now is the time to get clearer about your plans.

Things to think about:

- **Do** you plan to retire fully or gradually?
- **Do** you want a regular income, a lump sum, or a mix of both when you retire?
- **Are** you aware of the different ways you can take your pension?
- **Consider** whether security and guarantees are more important than flexibility

Actions you can take:

- **Review your investment choices and risk level** on Broadstone Engage Members. Many members are invested in the Scheme's Ethical Default Lifestyle Fund (the BPS's "Default Fund"), which is designed to manage your investments automatically over time, but others have selected their own investments.
- Set your **Target Retirement Age** on Broadstone Engage Members. When you first started paying into the BPS we calculated a retirement date for you - and this is shown on your annual statement. You can change this to your own Target Retirement Age based on your personal circumstances. If you are invested in the Default Fund, setting a Target Retirement Age is one of the most important actions you can take as a Scheme member. This age determines how the Scheme's Default Fund invests your pension in line with the Scheme's strategy. If your Target Retirement Age is too early or too late, your pension may be moved out of growth-focused funds either too soon (reducing potential growth) or too late (potentially exposing your savings to risk near retirement).
- Check all your pensions and **consider consolidating** them together.
- Consider getting **guidance or financial advice**.

IMMEDIATELY BEFORE / AT RETIREMENT

This is when you will need to make decisions about taking your pension.

Things to think about:

- **When** exactly do you want your pension to start?
- **How** will you take your pension benefits?
- **How** will your retirement income be taxed?
- **How** long does your pension need to last?

Actions you can take:

- If you were in the Scheme pre-2012 and have a former Scheme DB Plan pension (now with Just), there is currently an option to **combine both your DB and DC pension benefits at retirement**. This can be helpful if you wish to take part of your pension benefits as a tax-free cash lump sum.
- Make sure your **personal and bank account details** are correct.
- Read all **retirement options** information carefully.
- Use **free guidance** services before making a final decision.
- Take **financial advice** if you are unsure.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does Defined Contribution mean?

The BPS is a Defined Contribution scheme. This means:

- The employer and member make contributions
- The contributions are invested – either into the “Default Fund” or into investments selected by the members
- The member uses the funds to provide retirement benefits.

What options do I have when taking my DC pension?

Common options are included in the table below.

Do I have to take my pension at retirement age?

No. You can choose when to take your pension. It is important that you think carefully about when you want to retire and set your Target Retirement Age on the Broadstone Engage Members portal.

Can I take a lump sum?

Most people can take up to 25% of their pension as a tax-free lump sum. The rest is usually taxable.

OPTION	ANNUITY	FLEXI-ACCESS DRAWDOWN	CASH SUM
What is it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buying a guaranteed Income (for life or a set period), usually from an insurance company. • Some annuities can increase each year or provide income for a dependant after you die, but these options usually reduce the starting income. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using your Member’s Account to provide a flexible income. • With flexi-access drawdown, your pension stays invested and you can take income or lump sums when you choose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking all of your Member’s Account as cash at once, or as a series of lump sums.
Most suitable for members who...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are worried about running out of money in retirement. • Value a regular monthly payment. • Don’t want to look after their own investments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have other guaranteed pension income and/or access to other savings plans. • Wish to regularly access their funds flexibly. • Want to pass remaining pension funds to dependants on death • Are comfortable continuing to manage their own investments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have small funds. • Want to spend the funds now. • Do not need to rely on these pension funds in their retirement.

OPTION	ANNUITY	FLEXI-ACCESS DRAWDOWN	CASH SUM
Less suitable for members who...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Want to vary the amounts they receive - once bought, an annuity cannot usually be changed. Want to pass remaining pension funds to dependants on death. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't have alternative guaranteed income. Are worried about running out of money in retirement. Are not comfortable in managing investments - there is a risk that your pension could run out if withdrawals are too high or investments perform poorly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not have other pension savings to provide income in retirement. Will need to pay additional tax if the payment is received. Might have their State benefits affected if the payment is received.
Available in the scheme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, a transfer out would be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes (subject to charges) and for pension funds over £25,000. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, but maximum of 2 payments (across 2 consecutive tax years).

The options shown above could be used in combination and gradually over time, rather than all at once.

You should consider your options carefully and we have put some useful places where you can find additional information below.

How do I know what the best choice is for me?

You have huge flexibility and choices when taking your BPS DC pension. In reality, there is often no "right" or "wrong" choice - it's more about what is or isn't appropriate to each individual and his or her own personal circumstances.

Some of the factors you should consider before making your retirement benefit choices are:

- What is your own **appetite for financial risk**? Do you understand investment risks? Are you prepared to manage them?
- **Are you married or not?** Is your pension the only – or the main – pension between you and your spouse? Or does your spouse have a more valuable pension than you?

- Do you have **other savings or debts**, such as an outstanding mortgage?
- What is your **family history in terms of health and longevity**? Your health will have a bearing on the amount of annuity you could secure for yourself on the open market, for example.

See the section below on "**Getting Help and Guidance**" for suggestions on where you can access information to underpin your decisions.

Do I have to decide everything at once?

Not always. Some options allow flexibility, but decisions may be difficult to change later.

Will my pension be taxed?

How you opt to take your pension benefits will impact your future income and the amount of tax you pay. Income from annuities and drawdown is subject to income tax, while lump sums are only partially tax-free. We strongly recommend seeking regulated financial advice before making a decision.

How can I find out about other pensions I may have?

You can check your **state pension forecast** on the Government website [gov.uk/check-state-pension](https://www.gov.uk/check-state-pension)

The Government website [findpensioncontacts.service.gov.uk](https://www.findpensioncontacts.service.gov.uk) can help you **trace previous company pensions**.

The Government is due to launch a **Pensions Dashboard** later this year or early next year, which will provide access to pensions information online, securely and in one place. Watch this space!

What happens if I die?

Your pension may be paid to your beneficiaries depending on your choices.

GETTING HELP AND GUIDANCE

- **Broadstone Engage Members** is the portal available to Scheme members, accessible at engage-members.broadstone.co.uk. If you have not previously registered, please contact baptistpensions@broadstone.co.uk and an account can be set up for you. Broadstone Engage contains the most recent pension information and also allows you to view your latest pension account values, make changes to your investments and request payments.
- **Broadstone** are the Scheme administrators and will arrange payments for you. If you have any queries about your benefits, you should contact Broadstone in the first instance. You can contact Broadstone by telephone on **0117 937 8700** and by email at baptistpensions@broadstone.co.uk.
- **The Pensions Team** are available to answer questions about your pension and benefit statements. We cannot tell you which retirement option is right for you or recommend specific products or investments, but we are happy to help with general pensions queries.

You can contact the Pensions Team at pensionshared@baptist.org.uk.

- **MoneyHelper** is an organisation set up by Government to help members of pension schemes with their options. Their website [moneyhelper.org.uk](https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk) contains lots of useful information.
- **Book a free Pension Wise** appointment. A Pension Wise appointment explains the options for taking money from your defined contribution pension. It's impartial and backed by government. [moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement/pension-wise](https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement/pension-wise).
- Consider taking **Independent Financial Advice** when making decisions about your pension. A financial advisor can help you understand your options based on your circumstances. It is important that you check that any financial advisor is authorised by the **Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)**. The website [unbiased.co.uk](https://www.unbiased.co.uk) can help you find an FCA-regulated adviser.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM PENSION SCAMS

Pension scams are common and often target people as they approach retirement. Scammers may contact you unexpectedly and try to persuade you to take or transfer your pension.

Be cautious if someone:

- Contacts you out of the blue about your pension.
- Promises high or guaranteed returns.
- Pressures you to act quickly.
- Offers “free pension reviews” or early access to your pension.
- Asks you to transfer your pension to another scheme or investment.

To protect yourself:

- **NEVER SHARE** your pension or bank details unless you are sure who you are dealing with.
- Check that any financial advisor is authorised by the [FCA](#).
- Use trusted sources such as [Pension Wise](#) or [MoneyHelper](#) before making decisions.

If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. If you are unsure or feel pressured, stop and seek guidance.

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