



# Member guide

April 2024

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**This guide is for deferred members only**



# Introduction

This member guide is designed to help you understand how your Smart Pension account works and to provide you with relevant information, so you can make important decisions with confidence.

## Introduction

Your pension savings journey

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## Starting your journey

Why should I save?

How do I join?

How much do I pay?

Where does my money go?

How does my Smart Pension account work?

How much tax do I pay?

Can I opt-out?

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## Building your pension savings

Managing your Smart Pension account

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How safe is my money?

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Attitude to risk

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# Your pension savings journey

To help you find the information that is relevant to you, we've split this guide into four phases. These run from joining your pension scheme through to taking your pension savings.



## Starting your journey

You have been automatically enrolled or have just joined us.

## Building your pension savings

You have been saving for a while and want to know more about your account.

## Approaching retirement

You are 15 years or less to your retirement, but want to explore your options.

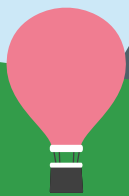
## Taking your pension savings

You are about to retire but you need to decide what option to take.

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# Starting your journey

- where does my money go?
- how can I access my Smart Pension account?



# Where does my money go?



## How does my Smart Pension account work?

1. Your savings are invested in a default investment strategy or a self-select fund of your choosing
2. You'll receive investment growth/loss on the money invested
3. We collect a fee for managing your pension savings directly from your fund
4. The money in your Smart Pension account is updated in real time

## Can I transfer in my other pension savings?

Having your pension savings in one place could make them easier to manage. However, there are a few things you need to consider before making a decision to transfer your other pension savings to the scheme, including:

- the charges for each pension plan
- whether there are any penalties for transferring
- whether there are any benefits or guarantees you may lose if you do decide to move your money
- what retirement options are available – these can vary depending on pension provider

To find out more information about transferring your pension savings, visit [www.smartpension.co.uk/members/transfer-pension](http://www.smartpension.co.uk/members/transfer-pension).

We do accept most transfer types. However, we encourage you to seek either regulated financial advice or impartial guidance.

If you are looking to transfer from a pension that is known as a 'safeguarded benefit' (for example Defined Benefit, Career Average Earnings (CARE) pension), you must get appropriate regulated advice from a qualified authorised financial adviser – unless the safeguarded benefit is worth £30,000 or less.

# How can I access my Smart Pension account?

You can find all the information you need to access your Smart Pension account within your welcome letter. For help signing in for the first time visit our help article: [smrt.pe/sign-in-for-first-time](https://smrt.pe/sign-in-for-first-time).

Once you've signed in to your Smart Pension account you can:



## Manage your Smart Pension account

Find your current pension value, make changes to your account and access important documents.



## Download the Smart Pension app

Manage your pension savings anywhere, at any time. Find the app on the App Store and Google Play.



## Provide for your loved ones

Add your beneficiaries so we know who you'd like your pension savings to go to if you die before taking them.



## Sign up to Smart Rewards

Free, unlimited access to over 1,200 discounts at major retailers in the UK. You could save up to £600 a year.\*

\* Smart Rewards is provided by our third-party service provider, Fizz Benefits Limited

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# Managing your pension savings

- monitor your savings
- choose your investments
- how safe is your money?
- assess your attitude to risk
- transfer your other pension savings



# Managing your Smart Pension account

To help you stay in control, you can instantly access your Smart Pension account, 24 hours a day, online and through our app.

We are one of the few providers that allow you to use simple voice commands with Amazon's Alexa and Google Home to do everything from checking the balance of your account to seeing how much your employer has added to your pension savings.

## Have a look in your Smart Pension account were you'll easily be able to:

- read messages and send messages to us
- update your contact details
- choose where your money is invested
- complete an expression of wish form
- change your retirement age



You can see a real-time value of your pension savings by downloading the Smart Pension app on the Apple Store or Google Play.

# How is my money invested?

We offer two approaches to investing your pension savings, we can manage your investments for you, or you can do it yourself.



## Investments we manage for you

### Investment strategies

We have some investment strategies that you can use, with a mixture of investments to choose from. As you get closer to retirement, we will automatically move your investments into funds that have lower risk and are therefore less likely to fall in value. You should let us know when you plan to retire and keep this updated in your Smart Pension account, so that your investment strategy is appropriate for your planned retirement age.



## Investments you can manage yourself

### Choose your own investments

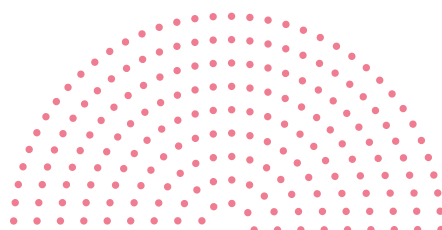
You don't have to use one of our investment strategies. In this case, you will need to choose the mixture of investments yourself and keep an eye on them, changing them if you consider it necessary to do so.

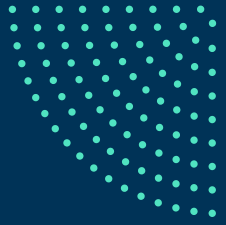


## How do I choose how my money is invested?

You can choose where your money is invested through the Smart Pension member app or in your Smart Pension account. When you've signed in, you will find the Investment guide, which will take you through all of the investment options that are available to you.

Remember, choosing your own investment options isn't for everyone. If you don't feel confident making a decision on your own, you can leave it to our team of investment experts.



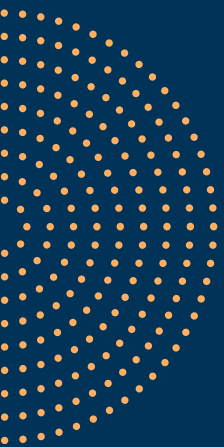


# How much we charge you

We collect fees for managing the investments and administration of your Smart Pension account. We collect these fees directly from your Smart Pension account.

You will be charged a percentage of your pension savings and a fixed monthly fee may also apply.

You can find out more about how much you pay by signing in to your Smart Pension account.



# How safe is my money?

The trustees conduct regular reviews of both the security of your pension savings and the managers who invest them on your behalf.

## Risk and reward

An investment is something that you buy because you hope you can make a profit on it. An investment's value will go up and down over time – no one can be sure what it will do over a short period, but over the longer term you can expect it to increase. Generally, those investments that can go up the most can also fall the most.

The following table shows the main risks that you face when you invest for later life.

You will get an annual pension statement with details about your Smart Pension account. It will show you the money you've paid in and how much your investment is worth.

Risk	Description
Investment	Your investments may not grow as much as you need, or they may shrink. As such, you may not have as much at retirement as you want.
Inflation	Your investments may not keep pace with rising prices (inflation), which means that your money won't buy as much when you retire as it would now.
Conversion	You could get less money than you expect when you withdraw it from your account, because your investments don't match your plans. For example, if you want to buy a guaranteed income, also known as an annuity, the cost of that income could have increased, but your investments might not have grown as much, so you will end up with less income.

# Attitude to risk

Each one of us has a different attitude to risk. It's helpful to know where you stand, so the following questions might prove useful:

- Will you have income from other sources as well as your workplace pension, such as the State Pension or income from property or other investments, when you retire?
- Can you afford to pay a little extra into your account, if necessary, to boost your savings?
- Are you prepared for your investments to fall in value, if there's the probability of greater long-term gains?
- Can you work for longer than you'd planned, or delay taking money from your account?
- Will you be relying on your pension for all or most of your income when you stop work?
- Are you a long way from retirement, so your investments have time to recover if they fall in value?
- Will you have to fund mortgage payments or have to pay home rental costs in retirement?

## What if I change jobs?

If you change jobs, it is easy to transfer your pensions savings to either your new employer's pension scheme or a personal pension.

If you already have a personal pension, or a pension from previous employment, it is also easy to transfer these to your Smart Pension account. If you are thinking about transferring a pension from a previous pension scheme, you should consider taking advice from an a regulated financial adviser. This is because you might incur transfer costs or risk giving up valuable guarantees. If you would like to find out about more about guarantees and what they are, you can read our transfer guide at [smrt.pe/transfer-guide](https://www.smartpension.co.uk/members/transfer-pension).

Many people find it easier to manage their pension savings by having them all in one place. If you change jobs frequently, this may be of particular interest to you, rather than having to track down all your pension savings when you come to retire. This could also reduce the charges you have to pay.

To find out more about transferring your pension savings visit [www.smartpension.co.uk/members/transfer-pension](https://www.smartpension.co.uk/members/transfer-pension).

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# Approaching retirement

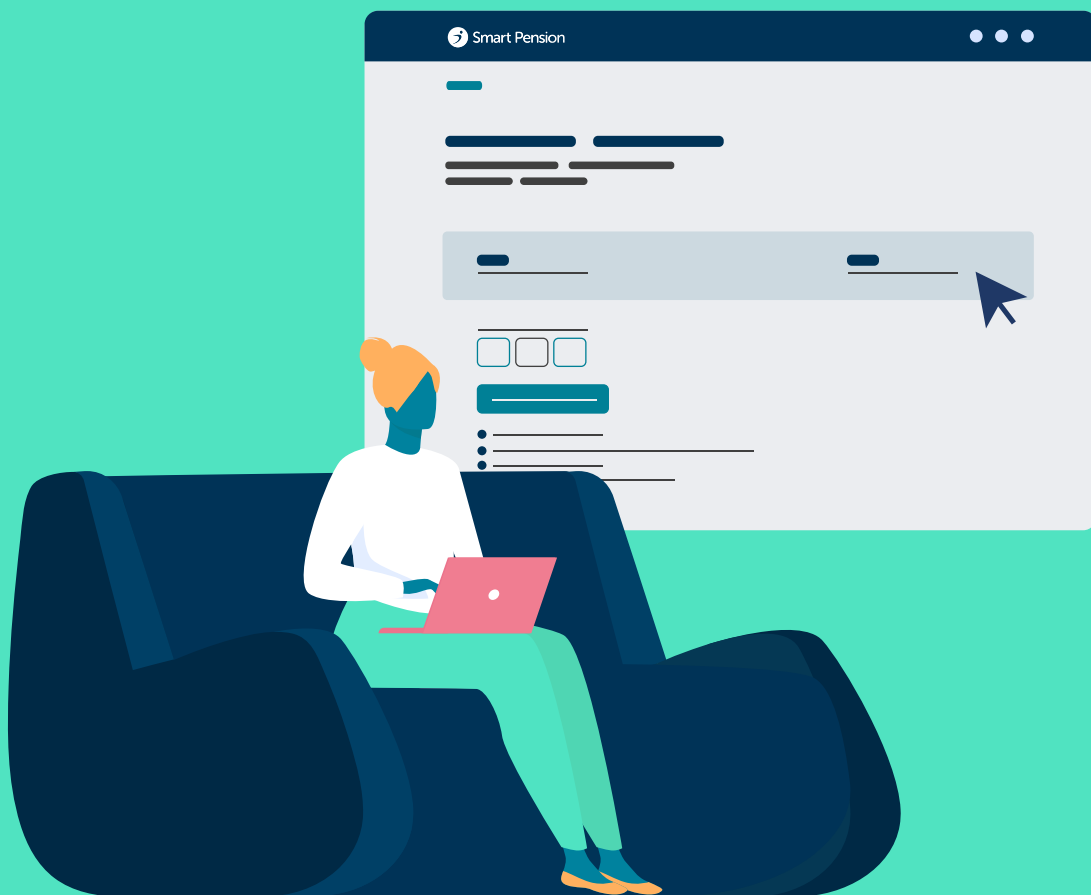
- get your finances in shape in the run-up to retirement
- get free and impartial guidance from Pension Wise (this is now part of MoneyHelper Service)





## Ivanna is 58 and had planned to retire in two years' time

“I had planned to retire at 60. My husband has already taken early retirement, and we wanted to enjoy spending time together, particularly travelling. But now I won't get my State Pension until I'm 67 – that's changed my plans. The team at Smart Pension have written to me, saying that I can delay taking my Smart Pension so it could grow, which is a good idea. Alternatively, I can make some additional contributions now, to give my account a boost for the next few years. They also suggested I should get some guidance from Pension Wise so I've made an appointment to discuss the best way forward.”





# When can I retire?

The minimum age at which you can access your pension savings is 55. This is expected to rise to 57 in 2028.

## Thinking ahead

You need to think about when you might want to withdraw some or all of your pension savings, so you can prepare well in advance.

You should consider whether you are invested in the most suitable funds and whether you might want to change your investment strategy.

## Free guidance from Pension Wise

Help is at hand from Pension Wise (this is now part of MoneyHelper Service), which is a free and impartial government service that gives information about the different ways you can take money from your pension savings. You can book an appointment for a 45-60 minute conversation with a Pension Wise specialist if you are 50+. You'll get personal guidance on:

- your pension options
- tax
- which options might be suitable for you

Appointments are over the phone or face to face. At the end, you get a summary of your pension options and the next steps you need to take. You can contact Pension Wise on 0800 138 3944 or through their website [www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement/pension-wise](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement/pension-wise).

# Nudging you towards your retirement

To help you make informed decisions when you approach retirement, we will contact you:



We get in touch with you to make you aware that Pension Wise is now available. We will also remind you that you can access your pension savings at age 55.

We contact you to encourage you to start thinking about your retirement options. We also provide you with some information about your options and where you can find impartial advice.

We provide you with more information about what options are available to you in retirement.

We remind you that you'll need to make a decision about how you'd like to take your pension savings.



We will also send you nudges before and after your selected retirement age. We do this between the ages of 55 and 70 to remind you to consider your retirement options and make a decision that is right for you.

# What about my State Pension?

The State Pension is payable after reaching the State Pension age which is calculated specifically according to your date of birth. You can check your own State Pension age using the online calculator at [www.gov.uk/calculate-state-pension](https://www.gov.uk/calculate-state-pension).



## Will my State Pension age change?

The State Pension age is going to be kept under review, which means that it could change again in the future, depending on different factors such as changes in life expectancy.

The government is planning further increases, which will raise the State Pension age from 66 to 67 between 2026 and 2028.



## Can I get a State Pension forecast?

Yes, you can find out how much your State Pension might be, along with further information about State Pension Benefits at [www.gov.uk/state-pension-statement](https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-statement). The basic Flat-Rate State Pension is £221.19 per week but the actual amount you will get will depend on your national insurance record.

This is correct for the 2024/25 tax year.

You can out more information by visiting [www.gov.uk/new-state-pension](https://www.gov.uk/new-state-pension).

# Beware of scammers

As your Smart Pension account grows, so too does your risk of losing your money through one of today's increasingly sophisticated scams.

Watch out for text messages, letters, emails or phone calls offering to help you with your pension, particularly if you're promised big returns. Unsolicited cold calls, emails, texts and door visits about your pension became illegal in January 2019. If you receive one it is very likely to be a scam.

If someone puts you under pressure to make a quick decision, or offers you a cash inducement, there's a significant chance that they are acting fraudulently. If you do transfer to a fraudulent account, you could face a big tax bill for withdrawing your pension savings, even though you may have lost your savings.

You can learn how to become scam smart by visiting our website at [smrt.pe/scam-smart](https://smrt.pe/scam-smart). You can also find more information about protecting yourself from scams at [www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart](https://www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart) or by visiting [www.pension-scams.com](https://www.pension-scams.com).

If you suspect a scam, report it to the Financial Conduct Authority's consumer helpline on 0800 111 6768 or Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.

If you would like to know how to spot a scam you can download [www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/trustees/communicate-to-members/warn-members-about-pension-scams](https://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/trustees/communicate-to-members/warn-members-about-pension-scams).

You can also contact MoneyHelper, who will be able to provide guidance, on 0800 011 3797 or at [www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/money-troubles/scams/](https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/money-troubles/scams/)

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# Taking your pensions savings

- what will your retirement income be?
- different ways to take your pension savings
- what else do you need to consider?

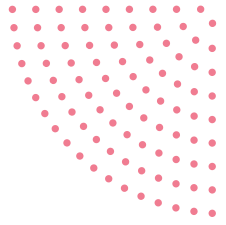




## Marwan is 62 and retires next month

“I considered working for a couple more years but, having talked through the facts with my husband and with Pension Wise, I decided to retire this year. I’m opting for taking a flexible income, keeping as much money in my Smart Pension account as possible so it can continue to grow, but knowing that the funds are there if I have an unexpected large expense. Once I get my State Pension, I hope I’ll be taking less from my own Smart Pension account. With that and my husband’s State Pension, we are hoping to be able to go on more holidays, although I guess we might also be spending time – and money – with our grand-nieces and nephews.”





# What will my retirement income be?

You should consider how and when you want to retire, so that means taking time to think about things like:

- how much money will you have?
- how long will it need to last?
- what are your options?
- what your life will look like in retirement – how will you spend your time?

The value of your pension savings at your retirement will depend on a number of factors:

- the amount of contributions paid in
- the performance of your investments
- the charges that apply to your account
- the age you take your pension savings

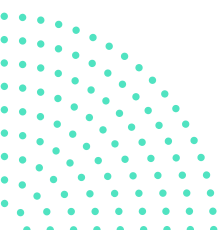
Any cost of taking your pension savings (for example the cost of buying a guaranteed income or taking a flexible income).

## Your options at retirement

You don't have to stop working to take your pension savings. You may want to work for a few more years to top up your Smart Pension account and provide a better income for when you finally retire. You may like to continue working, but for fewer hours each week. Alternatively, you might want to take a break, travel or spend more time with your family.

Usually, the earliest date at which you can access your Smart Pension account is your 55th birthday. As the State Pension age increases, this minimum retirement age is expected to increase to 57 by 2028.

Before you decide to take your pension savings it's important to consider your options carefully. If you are 50 or over, you can get free and impartial guidance about your pension options from Pension Wise (this is now part of MoneyHelper Service).



# What are your options when you retire?

Here are the five main options you have at retirement.

## Keep your savings invested for longer

You might decide that you aren't ready to take your pension savings yet and would like to keep them invested.

Keeping your pension savings invested will give your money a chance to grow, but you should be aware that the value of your pension could go down as well as up.

## Taking a flexible income (income drawdown)

You take income directly out of your account. This gives you the flexibility to vary your income to suit your needs. You will also need to keep managing your investments after you retire. There is a risk that you could run out of money sooner than you planned if your investments do not grow as much as you hoped or if you over withdraw.

## A guaranteed income (also known as an annuity)

You can use your account to buy a guaranteed income for life from an insurance company. You can choose if this income increases each year and if someone else gets paid after you die. You need to shop around to get the right option for you. This option gives you the security of knowing that your income is guaranteed, however long you live. Once you have bought a guaranteed income, you cannot change your mind, so you won't have the flexibility to change your income if your circumstances change. Please note that annuities are not Shariah compliant.

## Taking it all in one go

You take your account as a lump sum. You could pay a higher amount of tax if you take a large cash sum as it will get added to any earnings in the year for tax purposes.

From 6 April 2024, the total amount of tax-free sums that you can receive across all of your pension savings during your lifetime is limited to £268,275 - this is called the lump sum allowance (LSA). This limit applies unless you have a protected right to a higher lump sum allowance or transitional rules apply. Any excess amount that is paid over the LSA is subject to income tax at your marginal rate.

## You can choose more than one option

You can also choose to take your pension savings using a combination or all of the options. If you have more than one pension, you can use the different options for each pot. You can also combine pots together to make larger pots.

If you are ready to take your pension savings, email [pensionclaims@smartpension.co.uk](mailto:pensionclaims@smartpension.co.uk).

You don't have to take your pension savings all at once and you need to consider your own personal circumstances before you make a decision. You are also able to leave your savings for a little longer should you need to.

You should be aware that different pension providers offer different retirement options. The features, charges and payment rates will also differ between different providers.

You should also note that the tax you will need to pay could change depending on the option you choose.

## What options are available at Smart Pension?

You can find out about the retirement options available at Smart Pension by reading our retirement options guide at [www.smrt.pe/retirement-options-guide](http://www.smrt.pe/retirement-options-guide).

If you're over 55 and ready to take your pension savings, you can email us at [pensionclaims@smartpension.co.uk](mailto:pensionclaims@smartpension.co.uk).

# What else do I need to know?

## What happens if...

### I wish to transfer other pension savings?

If you have pension savings with a previous employer's pension scheme, you may be able to transfer them into this pension scheme. Find out more at [smartpension.co.uk/members/transfer-pension](https://smartpension.co.uk/members/transfer-pension) and if you still have questions please contact [transfers@smartpension.co.uk](mailto:transfers@smartpension.co.uk).

### I get divorced?

If you get divorced or your civil partnership ends, the pension savings you've built up are usually taken into account by the court when deciding on a divorce settlement or dissolution of a registered civil partnership.

When a marriage or civil partnership ends, courts deal with the pension arrangements in one of three ways.

- The value of your savings can be 'offset' against other financial assets, like the marital home.
- Your savings can be subject to a 'pension sharing' order, where a proportion of your pension is given to your ex-spouse or registered civil partner. Your savings are then reduced as a result.
- Part of your savings can be 'earmarked' through a court order for your ex-spouse or registered civil partner to receive when you retire.

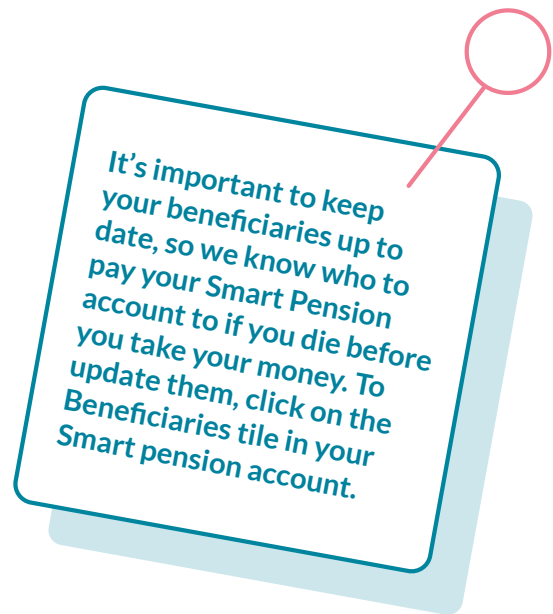
### I'm seriously ill?

If your circumstances are life-threatening, you may be able to get access to your pension savings earlier. For example, if you're diagnosed with a very serious or terminal condition, where your life expectancy is determined to be less than 12 months, you may be able to take the whole of your pension savings as a lump sum. If this happens before you reach the age of 75, the money would be tax-free, provided you have available lifetime allowance. If you're over the age of 75, the lump sum will be taxed at your marginal rate of income tax.

## I die?

If you die before taking your pension savings, the trustees who look after the scheme will decide who will receive this money – for instance, it could be your family or other dependants. To help them make this decision you should keep them updated on who you would like to benefit. To enable them to take your wishes into account you should add your beneficiaries, which you can do in your Smart Pension account.

When making their decision, the trustees will also consider anyone who was financially dependent on you, your marital status and the terms of your will. It is therefore important to keep your beneficiaries up to date if your circumstances change (for instance, if you marry, divorce, remarry or enter into a civil partnership).



## I have a complaint?

We aim to provide excellent customer service for all our customers. However, like all organisations, things can go wrong from time to time.

If you do have a complaint, you can get in touch with us by emailing [complaints@smartpension.co.uk](mailto:complaints@smartpension.co.uk) or calling 0333 666 2323.

Once we have received your complaint, we will send you an acknowledgement within five working days.

Within four weeks of receiving your complaint, we will respond with either an overview of your complaint and the action that we intend to take in relation to it, or a holding response as the complaint requires further investigation.

We will send you a final response within eight weeks of the date we received your original complaint.

### **Use the trustee's Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP)**

We hope we will be able to resolve any problems that you may have. However, if you feel we have not resolved a problem to your satisfaction, we operate a formal Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP).

You can escalate your complaint by emailing [idrp@smartpension.co.uk](mailto:idrp@smartpension.co.uk) or writing to:

The trustees of the Smart Pension Master Trust, Smart Governance Limited  
The Smart Building,  
136 George Street,  
London,  
W1H 5LD

Your complaint will be investigated and referred to the Trustee Board for a decision. The trustees will aim to reach a decision about your complaint as soon as possible and within four months of the complaint being made under the IDRPs.

The trustees will write to you to let you know of its decision within a further 15 working days of its decision. If this is not possible, it will let you know the reason for the delay and when you can expect a reply.

## Can I contact The Pensions Ombudsman about my complaint?

You have the right to refer your complaint to The Pensions Ombudsman free of charge. The Pensions Ombudsman deals with complaints and disputes that concern the administration and/or management of occupational and personal pension schemes.

You can obtain and submit a complaint form online [here](#).

Alternatively, you can contact them by:

Telephone: 0800 917 4487

Email: [enquiries@pensionsombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@pensionsombudsman.org.uk)

Post: 10 South Colonnade, Canary Wharf, London, E14 4PU

## I have a general question about my pension savings?

If you have general requests for information or guidance about your pension arrangements, contact MoneyHelper.

Telephone: 0800 011 3797

Website: [www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement)

Post: Money and Pensions Service, 120 Holborn, London, EC1N 2TD



# Useful contacts

## GOV.UK

GOV.UK is a Government source of information on State benefits. On this website you can find information about the State Pension, pension credit, National Insurance in retirement and much more.

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

## The Pensions Regulator

The Pensions Regulator regulates workplace pension schemes and it can step in where they feel that a pension scheme is not being run properly or where it has evidence that members' benefits are endangered.

The Pensions Regulator, Napier House, Trafalgar Place, Brighton, BN1 4DW

Tel: 0345 600 0707

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

## Pension Wise

With the recent pension freedoms, you can now access a free and impartial government service about your defined contribution (DC) pension retirement options when you're over 50 years old.

[www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement/pension-wise](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement/pension-wise)

## The Pension Tracing Service

The Pension Tracing Service provides a tracing service for those who have lost contact with administrators of former pension schemes.

The Pension Tracing Service, 9 Mail Handling Site A, Wolverhampton, WV98 1LU

Tel: 0800 731 0193

[www.gov.uk/find-lost-pension](http://www.gov.uk/find-lost-pension)

## MoneyHelper

Free independent service, set up by the government to help you make the most of your money.

Tel: 0800 011 3797

[www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en)



# Legal stuff

The aim of this guide is to give general information about the Smart Pension Master Trust. It does not give personal or professional advice. If you need personal advice then you should speak to a regulated financial adviser. Remember that the value of investments is not guaranteed, and may go down as well as up and may fall below the original investment amount. You should not see past performance as an indication of future performance.

The Smart Pension Master Trust is governed by a document known as the trust deed and rules. In the event of any differences between the trust deed and rules and this guide, the trust deed and rules will apply. The Smart Pension Master Trust is registered with HMRC. Where links are given to external websites in this guide, neither Smart Pension Limited nor the trustees of the Smart Pension Master Trust are responsible for the content of those websites.

The trustees oversee the management and running of your pension savings scheme. Your employer has chosen Smart Pension to administer and sponsor the pension scheme. Your relationship is not with Smart Pension, but with the Smart Pension Master Trust and its independent trustees. Although your employer has chosen this pension savings scheme, the money saved in it is yours and you can do what you want with it, subject to legislation and the pension scheme rules.

The trustees create an annual report and accounts for the pension scheme. You may request a copy of this by contacting [trustees@smartpension.co.uk](mailto:trustees@smartpension.co.uk).

The trustees and Smart Pension will hold and use your personal data so that we can administer the pension scheme and provide you and your dependants with the correct benefits. We will do so in accordance with Data Protection legislation. For more information about how we use your personal data, see our privacy policy at [www.smart.co/footer/privacy-policy](http://www.smart.co/footer/privacy-policy).

Smart Pension is a trademark and trading name of the Smart Pension group of companies, comprising Smart Pension Limited and its subsidiary companies.

We are always looking to improve the way we communicate with our members. If you would like to give feedback, email [pension.communications@smartpension.co.uk](mailto:pension.communications@smartpension.co.uk).

This document is based on our understanding of the current tax rules and legislation as at 6 April 2024.



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