

Electricity North West Group of the
Electricity Supply Pension Scheme

electricity
north west

Bringing energy to your door

Pension news

for the Defined Benefit section
September 2022



INSIDE

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Welcome to this year's Defined Benefit (DB) Section newsletter



Malcolm Sugden
Chair

In this newsletter you'll find information about the upcoming member-nominated director election; more about Irina Krumova, one of our trustees; and an update on Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) equalisation and the pension increase exchange exercise.

We recently sent you your annual benefit statement which gives you more information about your pension. You'll already know that as the cost of living crisis takes hold, making informed financial decisions is more important than ever. If you're planning to retire within the next 10 years, you might want to review your options with an independent financial adviser (IFA) who will be able to review your retirement plans and recommend any changes. The trustees are currently looking to appoint a preferred IFA firm for the Scheme (likely to be in place by April 2023) to support you with your retirement decisions. Should you wish to engage with the preferred IFA you will need to pay for the advice received, however this will be a fixed fee and due to the Scheme paying the set up charges for the IFA firm to understand our Scheme benefits in detail, the fee will be much lower than if you engaged with your own chosen IFA. More details on this arrangement will follow soon.

As trustees, we're responsible for ensuring that the Scheme is well run and the money is well looked after. To do this, we hold a portfolio of suitable assets to generate the best investment returns that, together with future contributions, will meet the benefits of the Scheme as they fall due. The pandemic, the war in Ukraine and Brexit have led to inflation levels not seen since the 1970s. Despite these issues, we're

pleased that the Scheme's assets still outperformed its benchmark. You can read more about this in the Fund Performance section of the newsletter.

You may recall that in 2019 we purchased a buy-in with Scottish Widows, which provided the Group with a regular income that helps fund the monthly pension payments. This has decreased the level of risk to our assets and provided stability during these uncertain times.

We're currently in a 'Valuation year' which takes place every three years, so we won't be providing a *Summary Funding Statement* in this edition, but we will provide one as part of the 2023 newsletter. We hope to conclude our discussions with the Company to finalise the valuation and scheme funding plans before June 2023.

Don't forget, our website www.enwlpensions.co.uk contains the usual information including the Scheme's full report and accounts, news items, videos and tools to help you plan for life after work.

I hope you find the newsletter interesting and helpful. If you have any questions or feedback about this edition or have suggestions for articles to be included in future editions, please get in touch with the pensions team. You can find their details on the back page.

Focus on a Trustee director



Irina Krumova was appointed as a trustee director in November 2020. She has worked as a corporate finance manager at Electricity North West for the last seven years, having previously worked in various roles in finance and audit and qualified with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) in 2007. Irina is a member of the defined contribution section of the pension scheme and currently serves on the audit and admin discretion sub-committees.

What made you want to become a Trustee?

I've always been interested in pensions and gained some useful knowledge and understanding of pensions in my various roles in finance. I wanted to use my experience and learn more about this important topic. Also, I'd like to inspire colleagues to feel more passionate and engaged in the process of saving for their retirement.

What's the greatest challenge facing trustees of pension schemes?

Trustees are faced with increased workloads as a result of a plethora of changes in recent years in the relevant legislation and also various new requirements in terms of reporting and engagement with members and balancing this with the day job could be a challenge. As a new trustee I found the support of the other trustees and our professional advisors invaluable.

What do you find most rewarding about the role?

I've always wanted to do something to help others. Feeling that I am contributing to the running of the pension scheme and supporting our members is the most rewarding part of the role for me.

What's one piece of guidance you would give someone about their pension?

Start saving for a pension. There are so many incentives that both the government and employers have put in place and saving for a pension is a great way to plan for the future.

What do you do in your spare time?

I have two young children and love spending time with them. Currently I don't have much spare time for hobbies but when I do, I like watercolour painting and going for walks in the countryside.

Member Nominated Trustee Directors Elections Update

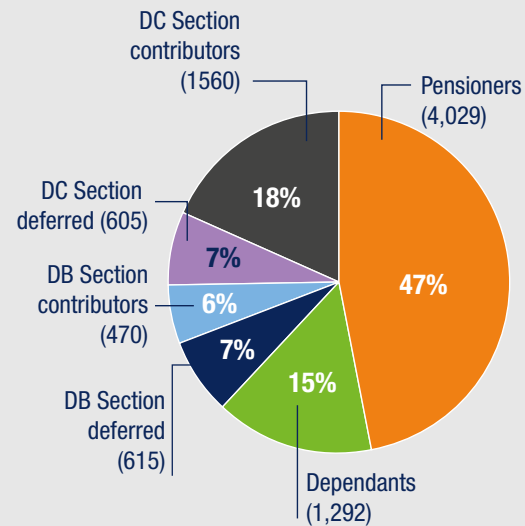
The Trustee Board consists of eight Trustee Directors - four appointed by the Company and four by the members. The Member Nominated positions last for four years and we run a ballot every two years for two of the positions. If you are eligible to nominate yourself for election under the Rules you will have received a communication from us.

The deadline for receiving nominations is 5pm on Friday 30 September. We will be communicating the next stage of the election shortly.

Scheme Accounts for the year to 31 March 2022

We've provided some of the main figures for the Defined Benefit section for the year below. You can find the full Trustee Report and Financial Statements on the pensions website: www.enwlpensions.co.uk

Membership data:



Membership numbers
Total members: 8,571
 as at 31 March 2022

Defined Benefit Fund Account:

Assets at 1 April 2021	£1,390.2m
Income	£84.5m
Contributions	£30.3m
Transfers in	£0.0m
Change in the value of investments	£54.2m
Outgoings	£81.2m
Benefits	£54.9m
Transfers out	£23.6m
Investment management expenses	£1.1m
Administrative expenses	£1.6m
Assets at 31 March 2022	£1,393.5m

The trustee's investment powers

The trustees are responsible for deciding the investment strategy for the pension scheme and can choose to make investments such as stocks and shares in companies ('equities'), government stocks ('gilts') and property. A range of alternative investments such as hedge funds and derivatives are also available.

The trustees' powers to invest are set out in the trust deed and rules along with in some legislation and they have to consult with the company over investment decisions too. Their main duty is to act in the best financial interests of all the scheme beneficiaries and all investment decisions are taken after receiving advice from professional investment advisers.

The trustee must also have a written statement of investment principles (SIP), which sets out the principles governing how decisions about investments are made. The SIP must

be reviewed at least every three years and whenever there has been a significant change in investment policy.

The trustee updated its SIP in response to the Department of Work and Pensions regulation to cover:

- policies for managing financially material considerations including environmental, social and governance factors and climate change
- policies on the stewardship of the investments
- an explanation of how the default strategy is in the best interest of members



The most recent update to the SIP was in May 2022 reflecting current investment decisions and can be found online at:

www.enwlpensions.co.uk/about-the-scheme/scheme-documents



Investment news

The primary objective of the scheme is to pay members' benefits when they fall due. Therefore, the trustees' main investment objective is to invest in assets that will generate returns, together with future contributions, to cover benefits as and when they are payable.

The trustees set the investment strategy taking into account a number of factors including the strength of the employer covenant, the long-term liabilities and the funding agreed with the employer.

The fund is split into two types of assets – return-seeking assets and liability-driven assets:

- **Return-seeking assets** help to increase the value of the fund, while taking into account the level of acceptable investment risk set by the trustees.
- **Liability-driven assets** make sure we have enough fixed or inflation-adjusted cashflow in the future.

The trustees recently launched their environment, social and governance (ESG) strategy which has informed the switch of the scheme's equity holdings with Legal & General Investment Management to Paris Aligned funds, who are driving net zero investments that align to our ESG strategy. This switch was done following advice from our investment providers and consultation with the company. Insight, one of the Scheme's investment managers has also released their carbon neutral promise and Scottish Widows, the scheme's buy-in provider, has recently made significant improvements to its ESG policy.

Developed global equity markets provided strong returns over the reporting period due to the support provided by governments and central banks throughout the pandemic. Equity markets also responded positively to the continued vaccine rollouts and the associated economic recoveries seen across much of the developed world as economies reopened from lockdown measures.

Returns were negatively impacted over the first quarter of 2022 as markets became increasingly volatile in

response to inflation pressures and geopolitical events. Inflation rates rose to above policy target levels across most major developed economies due to previous accommodative monetary policy (accommodative monetary policy refers to the corrective measures adopted by a nation's central bank during an economic slowdown. It is an attempt to boost the money supply and meets the nation's money demand and supply chain issues). Messaging from central banks also saw a shift towards hints of more interest rate rises and a tapering of previous stimulus packages in an attempt to control inflation going forward. In addition, the Russian invasion of Ukraine increased the market volatility. The associated rise in energy and commodity prices further enhanced cost of living and inflation concerns. **Despite this volatility, major equity market indices delivered positive returns over the 12-month period to 31 March 2022.**

Global credit markets experienced a difficult 12 months due to inflation concerns, and subsequent interest rate rises being announced by many developed economies' central banks. Credit spreads widened across most credit markets over the period as investors reacted to the expectation of rising inflation and interest rates. In addition, the geopolitical risks posed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, such as the impacts of Western sanctions, the seizure of Russian assets and the possibility of defaults on Russian debt, weighed on credit markets over Q1.

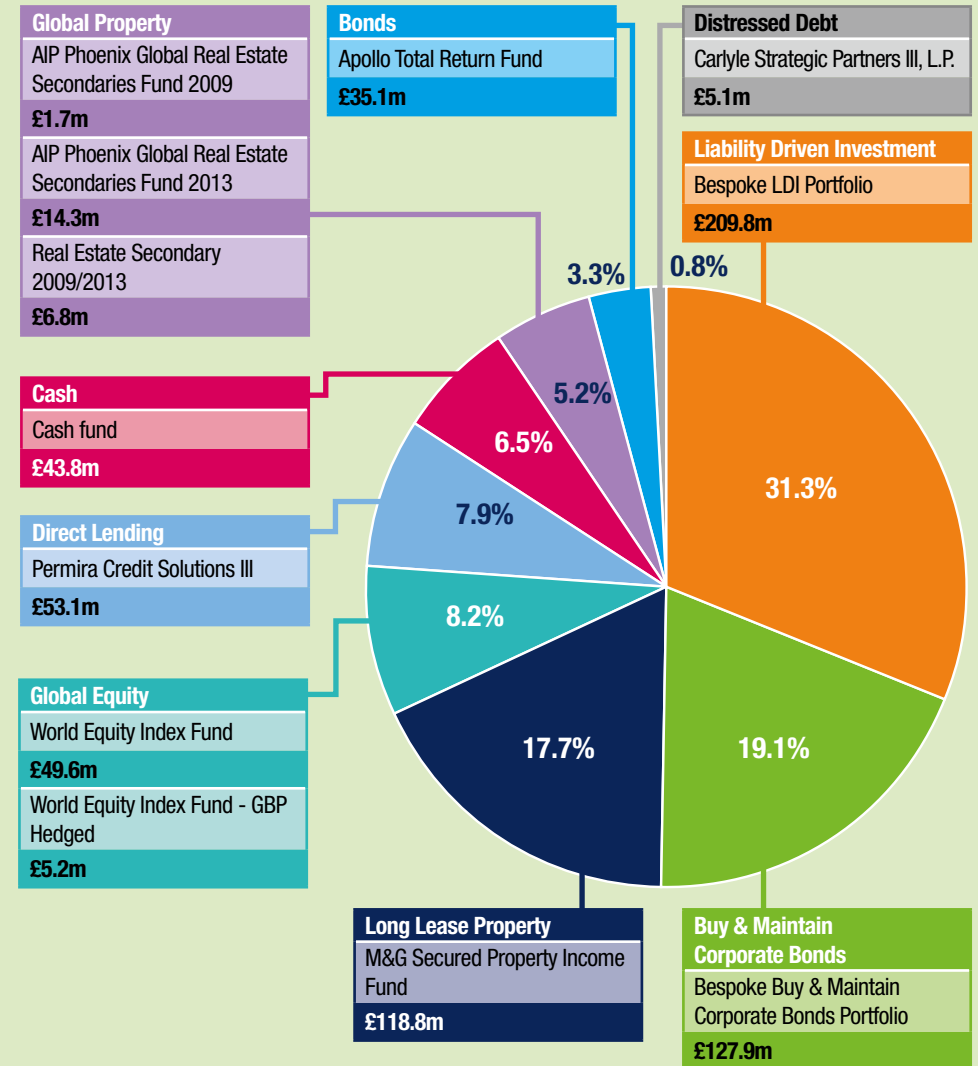
As above, inflation rose significantly over the reporting period, with UK Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) rising to 6.2% over the 12 months to 31 March 2022. The expectation of future interest rate rises and tapering of previous quantitative easing measures led to nominal gilt yields rising over the period. Index-linked gilts outperformed their fixed-rate counterparts as investors sought increased inflation protection.

At the end of the scheme year, the group's cash allocation was significantly higher than the target. The trustees, after receiving advice from the scheme investment advisors, decided to invest in two additional mandates, infrastructure equity and semi-liquid credit, which are in the final stages of being set up.

This is where the assets are invested as at 31 March 2022

What asset classes were the funds invested in?

Investment holding at 31/03/2022*



Total holding: £671.2m

*These figures exclude the buy-in policy with Scottish Widows.

Fund Performance

As part of the scheme's due diligence, the Trustees and our investment advisers, Isio, monitor the performance of the investments on a regular basis. Some of the funds have a set benchmark against which we can monitor the performance.

Liquid assets

Fund Name	Performance one year	Benchmark one year
LGIM – Global Equity (GBP Hedged)*	11.3%	11.3%
LGIM – Global Equity*	14.9%	14.9%
M&G – Long Lease Property	12.5%	-0.7%
Apollo - Total Return Fund	0.3%	-0.8%
Insight – Buy and Maintain	-5.4%	n/a – bespoke mandate
LGIM – LDI	6.1%	n/a

*Both LGIM – Global Equity Fund's performance figures are shown gross of fees.

Fund Name	Performance three year (annualised)	Benchmark three year (annualised)
LGIM – Global Equity (GBP Hedged)*	12.0%	12.0%
M&G – Long Lease Property	5.1%	3.2%
Insight – Buy and Maintain	4.5%	n/a – bespoke mandate
LGIM – LDI (Liability Driven Investment)	3.6%	3.6%

*Both LGIM – Global Equity Fund's performance figures are shown gross of fees.
LGIM – Global Equity - n/a – mandate invested in Sept-19

Illiquid assets

As the Scheme invests for the long term, a number of the investments are illiquid. Illiquid describes an asset or security that cannot be sold quickly due to a shortage of interested buyers or a lack of an established trading market. Illiquid assets cannot be easily converted into cash without potential for losing a significant percentage of their value.

For these illiquid managers we measure their annual performance relative to an Internal Rate of Return ('IRR'). The main reason for this is that the funds return differing levels cash throughout their lifespan and this can distort the normal performance calculations

Illiquid Managers	IRR (since inception)	Benchmark (LIBOR based return objective)
Permira – Direct Lending	6.8%	4.4%
Partners Group – Global Real Estate Secondaries	7.8%	4.5%
Morgan Stanley - Global Real Estate Secondaries 2013	7.1%	4.5%
Morgan Stanley - Global Real Estate Secondaries 2009***	7.6%	3.0%
Carlyle – Distressed Debt	9.2%	4.5%

*** Up to 31 December 2017 this was the period the Fund exited the final investments.

GMP Equalisation and Pension Increase Exchange Exercise



The trustees are pleased to report that the GMP equalisation and pension increase adjustments were made to the respective pensioners in February 2022.

We will be offering the pension increase exchange as an option for those coming up to retirement, and those who missed the cut-off date. We will provide further information directly to those affected soon (likely to be launched during 2023).



Next Actuarial Valuation

Our scheme actuary carried out the last formal valuation of the scheme at 31 March 2019.

The next formal valuation is being performed as at 31 March 2022. The trustees are currently in discussions with the Company and expect to complete the valuation process before the statutory deadline of 30 June 2023. We will then be able to update you on Scheme Funding as part of the 2023 newsletter.



The normal minimum pension age is increasing

The government has confirmed that the normal minimum pension age will increase from age 55 to 57 from 6 April 2028.

The normal minimum pension age is the earliest age at which most pension savers can access their private pensions without incurring an unauthorised payments tax charge (unless they take their pension due to ill-health or have a protected pension age). It was introduced in 2006 and increased from age 50 to age 55 in 2010.

The Pensions Regulator

We are required to tell you if the Pensions Regulator has used its powers in relation to the funding of the group – we are pleased to confirm that it has not had to use its powers.

Payments to the Company

The rules of the group don't allow for any payment of assets back to the company unless the scheme is wound up and has surplus assets. There have been no such payments.

Who would you want to receive your death benefits?

Everyone's family circumstances are different and there is no such thing as a typical family. So it's important to submit an Expression of wish form to let us know who you would want any death benefits to be paid to, and make sure it's updated if your circumstances change.

What is payable if I die?

If you die while you are still contributing to your defined benefit pension scheme, or within five years of retirement and before age 75, a lump sum death benefit is payable.

Why do I need to fill in a form?

As the scheme is written in trust, any death benefits are payable at the trustees' discretion. This means that the trustees, with the assistance of Railpen, will investigate your personal circumstances to establish who your beneficiaries are. Once they are satisfied that they have a full understanding of any dependants you may have, they will pay out any lump sums, tax-free*, in the proportion they see fit.

* benefits under the lifetime allowance, currently £1.073m, are payable tax free.

Also, as the benefits are written into trust, they don't form part of your estate and are not subject to inheritance tax. The trustees may ask to see a copy of your will when deciding who your benefits should be payable to, but they are not restricted by it.

To make sure the trustee is aware of who you would like the lump sum to be paid to, you need to keep your Expression of wish details up to date. You should consider updating them if your circumstances change. This should also speed up the process of paying a benefit.

The trustees are not legally obliged to follow instructions left on an Expression of wish form, but they usually do, particularly if your form is up to date. Forms can be downloaded from the pension website.

You can update your 'Expression of Wish' details at <http://enwl.myesps.co.uk>

Socially Responsible Investment and Corporate Governance

As part of our responsibilities as an institutional investor, the trustees have an obligation and interest in ensuring that the scheme's assets are invested in an ethical manner and with a keen eye on ESG issues.

We have an ESG policy that is available for you to read on our website, along with the scheme's latest implementation statement, www.enwlpensions.co.uk. We actively use these documents to review our approach to investing.



Updated lifestyle calculator

Can you picture your lifestyle in retirement?

For some people purchasing a sports car or a holiday home the day they retire might be realistic, but most of us just want to continue the lifestyle we've enjoyed while working.

Retirement might still be a long way off, but having a rough idea of how much income you might need will help you work out if you're currently saving enough for your future.

To help work out how much you might need, try using our updated lifestyle calculator on our website www.enwlpensions.co.uk/resources/lifestyle-calculator

The quick and easy calculator takes into account who you will be living with, where you will be living and what kind of lifestyle you hope for once you stop working.

It uses the Retirement Living Standards model created by the Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association, which sets out three levels of expenditure: minimum, moderate and comfortable. This gives you a sense of what different standards of living could cost you in life after work. The figures in the calculator are based on a 'basket' of common goods and services, which can be used as a starting point - if you think you would spend more, or less, you can change the amounts to create a personal target.

To find out more about the Retirement Living Standards, visit www.retirementlivingstandards.org.uk

The full basic state pension for 2022/23 is **£9,627 per year.**

Would this be enough for you to live on?



Don't let a scammer enjoy your retirement



According to Action Fraud, more than £30m has been lost since 2017 to pension fraud, as unauthorised 'advisers' tout unrealistic investments. Don't be the next victim of this fraud.

Anyone can be the victim of a pension scam, no matter how savvy they think they are. It's important that everyone can spot the warning signs.






Scammers try to persuade pension savers to transfer their entire pension savings, or to release funds from it, by making attractive-sounding promises they have no intention of keeping.

Scammers can be articulate and financially knowledgeable, with credible websites, testimonials and materials that are hard to distinguish from the real thing. Scammers design attractive offers to persuade you to transfer your pension pot to them or to release funds from it. It is then invested in unusual and high-risk investments like overseas property, renewable energy bonds, forestry, storage units, or simply stolen outright.

Find out how pension scams work and what to do if you suspect a scam and follow four simple steps to protect yourself from pension scams.



Scam tactics include:

-  contact out of the blue
-  promises of high/guaranteed returns
-  free pension reviews
-  access to your pension before age 55
-  pressure to act quickly

1. REJECT UNEXPECTED OFFERS



If you're contacted out of the blue about your pension, chances are it's high risk or a scam.

Be wary of free pension review offers. A free offer out of the blue from a company you have not dealt with before is probably a scam. Fortunately, research shows that 95% of unexpected pension offers are rejected.

2. CHECK WHO YOU'RE DEALING WITH



Check the Financial Services Register (www.fca.org.uk/firms/financial-services-register) to make sure that anyone offering you advice or other financial services is FCA-authorised.

If you don't use an FCA-authorised firm, you also won't have access to the Financial Ombudsman Service or the Financial Services Compensation Scheme so you're unlikely to get your money back if things go wrong. If the firm is on the FCA Register, you should call the Consumer Helpline on **0800 111 6768** to check the firm is permitted to give pension advice.

Beware of fraudsters pretending to be from a firm authorised by the FCA, as it could be what we call a 'clone firm'. Use the contact details provided on the FCA Register, not the details they give you.

If you suspect a scam, report it

- Report to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) by contacting their Consumer Helpline on **0800 111 6768** or using the reporting form at www.fca.org.uk
- Report to Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040** or at www.actionfraud.police.uk
- If you're in the middle of a transfer, contact your provider immediately and then get in touch with MoneyHelper's pension helpline: **0800 011 3797**

3. DON'T BE RUSHED OR PRESSURED



Take your time to make all the checks you need – even if this means turning down an 'amazing deal'.

Be wary of promised returns that sound too good to be true and don't be rushed or pressured into making a decision.

4. GET IMPARTIAL INFORMATION AND ADVICE



For pensions specific guidance you can go direct to the pensions and retirement section at www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement or call **MoneyHelper's Pensions Helpline** on **0800 011 3797**.

Financial advisers It's important you make the best decision for your own personal circumstances, so you should seriously consider using the services of a financial adviser. If you do opt for an adviser, be sure to use one that is regulated by the FCA and never take investment advice from the company that contacted you or an adviser they suggest, as this may be part of the scam.

Be ScamSmart with your pension. Check who you are dealing with.

www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart



*FCA Financial Lives

Our pensions website

Visit our website, www.enwlpensions.co.uk, to access a range of information, fact sheets, videos and calculators to help you make informed decisions about your pension.

On our website you can find:

- Forms, factsheets and booklets
- Scheme documents
- Our updated lifestyle calculator – get an idea of the income you might need when you retire
- Videos to help you understand topics that might affect your pension
- News items to keep you up to date with what's going on in the pensions world

Soon you'll also be able access to your own online record and be able to update personal data including your home address and death benefit nomination details. Pensioner members will also be able to access payroll and P60 information.



The Trustee's Data protection policy and Privacy notice set out how the trustee use your personal information and your rights under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). These can be found on our website: www.enwlpensions.co.uk/privacy-and-data

Pensioner payroll dates

Here are the pensioner payroll dates for the next 12 months:

Month	Pay day
October 2022	Monday 31 October
November 2022	Wednesday 30 November
December 2022	Friday 23 December
January 2023	Tuesday 31 January
February 2023	Tuesday 28 February
March 2023	Friday 31 March
April 2023	Friday 28 April
May 2023	Wednesday 31 May
June 2023	Friday 30 June
July 2023	Monday 31 July
August 2023	Thursday 31 August
September 2023	Friday 29 September



Pension increases 1 April 2022 for pensioners in protected category. For pensioners in our protected category, pensions were increased by 4.9% from 1 April 2022. All pensioners received a letter from Railpen with details of how their pension was calculated.

ESPS AGM 2022



This year's ESPS Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held virtually on Tuesday 22 November 2022, starting at 1pm.

If members wish to attend the Scheme AGM they will need to register.

For the Scheme AGM itself please register by using the following link:
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3878064796830457099>

For a "test" meeting which will be held on 17 November at 11am for those new to the virtual arrangements, please register by using the following link:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8826980927499295245>

These links, along with other Scheme AGM information, including the Privacy Notice, will also be shown on the new ESPS website soon (www.esppensions.co.uk). Members are encouraged to register as soon as possible on the above links.

The purpose of the Scheme AGM is to receive the Scheme Annual Report and Financial Statements and the Auditors Report, receive the Report of the Scheme Trustee, and conduct any general business, including the consideration of any resolutions proposed by members.

Members have up to 28 days before the date of the Scheme AGM to submit a written resolution to the scheme secretary with a copy to the company secretary.

This year members will have until Tuesday 25 October 2022 to submit any written resolutions. In order for members to exercise their vote on any resolution they must be present (virtually) at the meeting.

Written resolutions should be submitted by both email and post to:

Email: kevin.groves@capita.com and paul.wallis@capita.com

Address: Kevin Groves, Scheme Secretary, The Electricity Supply Pension Scheme, Capita Pension Solutions Ltd, Hartshead House, 2 Cutlers Gate, Sheffield S4 7TL

Details of the agenda, resolutions and notices, along with copies of the Scheme Annual Report and Accounts and the minutes of last year's Scheme AGM are available on the ESPS scheme's website:

www.esppensions.co.uk

The meeting relates to the whole of the ESPS, not just the Electricity North West Group and all members of the Scheme are welcome to attend.



This year's AGM will take place virtually



Keep in Touch

If you're a current employee and have questions about your pension, or would like to make any changes you can contact the pensions team.

- by telephone on **0843 311 4530**
- by email at **pensions@enwl.co.uk**
- by letter to **304 Bridgewater Place, Birchwood Park, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 6XG**

Your Pensions Team

Trustees

Appointed by the Company

PAN Trustees UK LLP
(Independent-represented
by Mike Roberts);
Malcolm Sugden (Chair)
Irina Krumova
Gillian Williamson

Member Elected

Chris Dooley
Mike Kay
John Leigh
Ken Scott

Advisers

Pensions Team

Colin Ross
Luke Warwick
Leah Taylor
Lisa Dutton

Administrator

Railpen

Group Actuary

Aon Limited

Auditor

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

Investment

Isio Ltd

Scheme Custodian

The Bank of New York Mellon

Legal

Sacker & Partners LLP

AVC Provider

Aegon

You can contact our AVC administrator (Railpen) directly:

- by telephone on **0345 600 2050**
- by email at **enwl@railpen.com**
- by letter to **Railpen, PO Box 331, Brinkburn Road, Darlington DL1 9PR**

If you're no longer an employee of Electricity North West, you contact our administrators Railpen directly to make changes:

- by telephone on **02476 472 580**
- by email at **enquiries@railpen.com**
- by letter to **Railpen, 2 Rye Hill Office Park, Birmingham Road, Coventry, CV5 9AB**

Please remember to quote your name, date of birth and National Insurance number to help us deal with your enquiry as quickly as possible.

Other useful contacts

The Pensions Regulator

The UK regulator of work-based pension schemes
www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk

Pension Tracing Service

Trace a personal or company pension scheme
www.gov.uk/find-pension-contact-details

Department for Work and Pensions

Find out how to plan your pension and what you need to do as you near retirement age
www.gov.uk/plan-retirement-income

Independent Financial Advice

Find an independent financial adviser near you
www.unbiased.co.uk

Pensions Ombudsman

Investigates complaints about how pension schemes are run
www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk

Money Helper

Provides information and tools to help you manage your money
www.moneyhelper.org.uk

Hargreaves Lansdown

Provides further tools and resources to help guide members through to retirement
www.retirementsservice.co.uk/enw

Financial Conduct Authority

www.fca.org.uk

