

## **Transcript: Scheme Benefits Session on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

### **Intro, Housekeeping, Brief Outline [00:00]**

My name is Leah Sheerin. I'm the Employer Liaison Officer here at NILGOSC.

Today's presentation is on Scheme Benefits. Very similar to yesterday's presentation if anyone was there for that seminar. Yesterday's seminar was, well the title of it is, Pension Awareness. The difference - the key differences are, this one goes a bit more in depth, this presentation today into, specifically, pre 1st of April 2015 benefits because that would have been a different layout of the Scheme and the way that your benefits were worked out at retirement was slightly different if you have benefits before 1st April 2015. So, yesterday's presentation, if any of you were there for that, you will notice that some slides are the same, but quite a few of them are just more in-depth, and quite a few of them are - are quite different, actually just to include that final salary pre 1st of April 2015 membership as well.

As I mentioned my colleague Sinead Nicholson should be joining us very soon. Sinead Nicholson is our Communications Officer here at NILGOSC. Sinead will be taking us through a demonstration of My NILGOSC Pension Online. If you've sat in for one of these seminars before on Scheme Benefits or indeed on Pensions Awareness, then you'll kind of know the layout by now. If you're completely new here and you haven't been to one of these before, then you're absolutely welcome.

Just a bit of housekeep - keeping first of all before we get stuck into the slides themselves. So we will be muting all attendee microphones during the presentation. Please do ensure that you keep questions for the end. I'm just going to check here because I think I am sharing. Yeah, that's more what I want to share there, the big slide on the screen. So apologies for that. So please do keep questions for the end, as I say, we're trying to mute everybody throughout the presentation just to make sure that we can get through the slides in a timely fashion. At the very very end, there'll be time for questions, and you can ask questions verbally.

Please do put questions into the chat if you want throughout the presentation. The only thing is you may be asking questions that I'm actually going to deal with on a later slide, so just be aware of that. If we notice that you've asked something in the - in the chat and I've dealt with it later in a slide, then we'll just not answer. But please

do feel free to keep any questions until the end if you do want to ask them verbally, you'll be invited to unmute yourself once you've raised your hand, and we've called on you.

We are recording this session today, and the recording will be checked by our communications team before being posted to our website within a few weeks. So, if you are looking for the recording or you know somebody like a colleague, who couldn't make it today who wants the recording after, just be aware that that will be posted to our website. It won't be sent out to everybody. it'll be available on our website within a few weeks after our communications team just check it. They will be cutting things like, any questions asked verbally at the very very end of the presentation; they'll be cutting those from the final recording, so that's why they - they take a wee while to just edit it and make it ready for everybody to view.

Please note that this seminar today is only for members of the LGPS NI, which is the scheme that you're in in which is administered by NILGOSC ourselves. So just note that it won't apply to any teaching staff or lecturers. So just be aware of that if you're a teaching staff or a lecturer, then this won't be appropriate for you today.

If you are sending in questions during the presentation, as I say, you can do that via the chat. But as I say if we don't get to your question in the chat throughout the presentation, please do ask it verbally at the end. Just in case you need to leave at the end. And I want to make sure that your question is dealt with as much as we can possibly deal with it.

## Content Outline

So, without further ado, what we're going to look at in today's slideshow; we're going to look at first of all a summary of your benefits, so what are the benefits of actually being a member of the pension scheme? We will look at how you go about joining the Scheme For most of you it'll be an automatic process of just being brought into the Scheme under your contract of employment. We'll look at what does it cost to be a member of the Scheme and avail of the benefits that all members of the Scheme can avail of. We will look at how your pension is worked out. We'll look at how can you go about increasing your pension benefits. And there's two ways to do that which I'll go through in detail. AVCs or additional voluntary contributions and APCs,

additional pension contributions. We'll go through those two methods, and I'll show you where you go to actually apply for those if you're interested.

We'll look at what it means if you leave the scheme before retirement, - so before you get to your normal retirement age, if you leave before then - what does it mean for your benefits; and this will depend on how long you've been in the Scheme for, really. We'll look at some of the different types of retirements, really just crossing off the most common ones, such as ill-health retirement, flexible retirement, normal retirement, early retirement, and late retirement. We'll also look at a little bit of redundancy as well, just so you know what's available for you there through the Scheme if you are made redundant by your employer.

We'll look at death benefits. That will include things like the spouse's grant or the spouse's pension. Children's pensions if you have eligible children in the event of your death. And we will look also at the death grant, the lump sum death grant that's paid in the event of your death as well as a member of the Scheme.

Sinead will be taking us, as I said, through the demonstration of My NILGOSC Pension Online; that's our online member self-service portal where you can do lots of wonderful things such as running calculations for yourself, uploading documents directly to us rather than having to post or email to them - email them to us, and so on. So Sinead will show us a full demonstration of that and anyone who hasn't signed up for it before, can hopefully get signed up once Sinead shows you how to register today.

Lastly, we'll just look at a few things about preparing for your retirement. And then at the very end, as I say, we'll have some time for questions. Please, if you do need to head on at the very very end whenever the verbal question section come up, do feel free to head on You don't have to stay until the the bitter end. It's just to give people time - if they have specific questions at the very end, we can stay on for about 15, 20 minutes extra, okay.

## **What is a Pension with LGPS NI? [05:58]**

So, first of all, what is a pension with the LGPS NI? So that's the Local Government Pension Scheme Northern Ireland, which you're a member of. And that is the pension scheme that ourselves, NILGOSC, administer. So, first of all, it's a defined

benefit scheme, and what that means is that your pension in this Scheme is based on your pay, your membership length, and then an accrual rate gets added to it. So every single year it's - it's what we call a Career Average Revalued Earnings or CARE scheme as you can see in the second part there.

So when we talk about the CARE scheme or the CARE section of the Scheme that means the way that your pension is building up is year-on-year. When it comes to the end of the scheme year, which is the 31st of March every single year, we get your pensionable pay figure from your employer for that particular year, we divide it by 49, and it's that 1/49th of your pensionable pay that gets added directly into your pension pot per year. And that's how your pension within NILGOSC builds up.

Now, you will be seeing in a later slide that if you were a member in the Scheme before 1st of April 2015, you will have - those benefits built up before that period are calculated slightly differently, so I will show you how that's done. Anyone who is in the Scheme and only joined after 1st of April 2015, you don't have to worry about that. Your benefits will all be calculated based on this Career - Career Average Revalued Earnings or CARE section of the Scheme. But certainly, at the minute, everyone since 1st of April 2015, that's how your benefits build up year-on-year; 1/49th of your pensionable pay added into your pension pot. And I will show you an example of what a pension pot looks like in the CARE scheme.

Note also that your NILGOSC pension or your LGPS NI pension is payable for life, so once your pension is payable to you and you get it paid to you, that is payable for the rest of - the rest of your life.

And then whenever you do pass away, there are, as I say, death benefits that are payable in the event of your death as well. Your pension with NILGOSC is also index-linked, which means that we increase it in line with inflation. That's done through an annual adjustment that wee accrual rate that gets added onto your CARE pension pot at the end of every year around March time. So that's to hopefully keep it in line with inflation and offset the effects of rising prices. Whenever you do come to take your pension, you still do get the benefit of that. We do still increase your benefits in line with inflation, so you do still get the benefit of that after you've retired as well.

Similarly, if you're a deferred member which means that you left the Scheme, so for example, you stopped working for the current employer that you'd been with and you were contributing to the Scheme under that employer. If you have deferred benefits, it means that your benefits are held in the Scheme until you then come to retire and claim them. Deferred members do still get the the benefit of that increase in line with inflation as well. So just to note that if you do have any deferred benefits waiting for your retirement in the Scheme

### **Scheme Benefits {08:51}**

So some of the benefits that are provided. So they're quite wide ranging. Firstly, just to know that your benefits are payable at your normal pension age. For most people that is going to be the same as their state pension age. Certainly, for their CARE benefits, so anything built up after 1st of April 2015. Anything built up on the Scheme before 1st of April 2015 - you may have a different normal pension age attached to those benefits, so they may become payable earlier. Usually, it's age 65 for anything built up to 1st of April 2015. So just be aware of that if you do have those benefits, you can take those at age 65 without reduction.

The only thing to note though is that you can't take your pre 1st of April 2015 benefits before your post April 2015 benefits, your CARE benefits.

And because your CARE benefits have that later normal pension age in line with state pension age attached to them, then it means that yes, you could access your pre '15 benefits without reduction from age 65, but you may face reductions on your CARE benefits, so just remember that. We do have early or late retirement options as well, so if you are in the position where you're looking to retire early, so that would be before your normal pension age of for example 67, 68, so if you're looking to go at age 61, 62 or so on, that would be deemed early retirement. You can absolutely do it from age 55 onwards.

The only thing is you would be facing some reductions, and we'll look at what that would mean and what the reductions look like at a later slide. As well, the inverse of that is there are late retirement options, as I say, so you can also stay on the Scheme past your normal pension age of 67, 68 or so on, and keep working and keep building up pension. And because you're staying in the Scheme later than expected, you will be expecting to have increases - actuarial increases applied to

your - your pension benefits, so you'd expect to get a bit more because you're taking it at a later date.

There's also ill-health protection available to all members of the pension scheme.

I do have a full slide on ill-health protection whenever we come up to talk about some of the different types of retirement, so if you have any questions about ill-health protection, just leave them until after we go through the slide; and you can always ask them at the end if you need something dealt with in more detail. So ill-health protection means that if you get to the point where you can no longer work due to ill-health reasons, you can go through the ill-health process in the Scheme, which means that your employer - you would speak to your employer - your employer would then come to us on your behalf and ask for you to be assessed by one of our independent medical practitioners, one of our scheme doctors.

They would assess you for ill-health retirement and if they deem that you're suitable for it, they would then... so if you're successful in getting ill-health retirement, you get all of the pens - the pension benefits that you've built up to that point of ill-health retirement paid out to you immediately without any reductions. And then you're also entitled to an enhancement payment on top of that. That enhancement payment will always be related to whether you're tier 1 or tier 2. Tier 1 is - basically you're expected to not be able to work in any kind of gainful employment up to the point that you're due to retire, so your normal pension age. That would be tier 1.

Tier 2 is a kind of lesser tier, which means that certainly at the minute you're deemed to be at the point of ill- health where you can't have gainful employment or you can't hold gainful employment, but at some point you may be able to before your normal pension age. So we'll deal with that in a little bit more detail on a future slide in the presentation.

There are death benefits, as I mentioned before, that are payable in the event of your death as a scheme member.

As there are survivors' pensions paid to any spouse, or civil partner, or cohabiting partner. There are children's pensions; they're payable to any eligible children that remain in the event of your death. And we'll go through what that means in terms of eligible children, what makes them eligible or ineligible. And then finally, there's the

lump sum death grant, and that is a death grant that is payable to anyone that you choose.

NILGOSC does retain ultimate discretion on who gets paid the death grant. Just because we need to make sure it's definitely going to the - the right person. But certainly, Sinead will be showing you where you can go on the My NILGOSC Pension Online platform to nominate your beneficiaries, so who you want to actually receive that death grant in the event of your death.

There is redundancy protection under the Scheme as well for all scheme members.

Redundancy protection means that if you're made redundant by your employer, then your benefits should be paid out to you immediately without any reduction. Your employer covers the cost of them being paid to you early. So I do have a slide on that that goes into a wee bit more detail surrounding it as well.

And then finally, another really good benefit of the Scheme is that you are able to pay extra to increase your pension benefits. And I mentioned that before. I will have slides on the two different ways you can do this. There's the APCs and the AVCs.

### **Contractual Enrolment [13:46]**

So, looking at how most members will come into the Scheme, so how do you actually become a member of the Scheme? Most of you will have come in through, what we call, contractual enrolment. This means that your employer brings you in as part of your contract of employment, so once you join employment, your employer brings you into the Scheme. So your employer does have to contractually enrol you if – well, first of all, they are a scheme employer, so they are an employer who work with the Scheme and have members within the - the pension scheme. They also have to bring you in and contractually enrol you from the first date of your employment if you are under the age of 75 and if you have a contract of employment for more than three months. So if you meet those two bullet points, then you would expect to be brought into the Scheme straight away.

You can choose to opt out of the Scheme at any time.

It's absolutely up to you. If you do choose to opt out, there is a wee Opt Out form available on our website that you need to fill in, give to your employer, and your

employer sends it on to us, and we then know that contributions should be stopping from both yourself and your employer each month. If you do opt out of the Scheme, you can choose to opt back into the Scheme anytime. If you even want to opt out for a short while and then come back in when you're in the position to start paying towards it again, that's absolutely fine.

There's no limit on the amount of times that you can opt out and opt back in.

In either case, you just go to your employer, they'll tell you where to get the form that you need to fill in, and then they'll send it on to us on your behalf.

If your contract is for less than three months, then your employer won't be bringing you in via contractual enrolment because it's only if you have a contract of employment for more than 3 months. If you're somebody who has a short-term contract for less than 3 months, you can still choose to join the Scheme, but you just need to tell your employer, "I wish to opt into the pension scheme with NILGOSC." Because they don't have to automatically bring you in if the contract is for less than three months, you can still choose to, but the employer doesn't have to bring you in themselves.

### **What does it Cost? [15:33]**

What does it cost then to be a member of the pension scheme? So to avail of those benefits we talked about, such as redundancy protection, ill-health protection, and so on. What does it actually cost you the member and also your employer because they, do remember, pay contributions towards - on your behalf towards the Scheme as well for your scheme membership.

So there are employee contributions which are paid by you, the member. These are set by regulations, so scheme regulations. They are assigned based on your earnings so your pensionable pay for the year, that kind of salary rate, is going to be what determines your contribution rate that you pay each month. It's a percentage of your pensionable pay paid per month, so you should see it coming out of your pay slip each month, unless you've opted out, and you're no longer a member.

You can see there in the grid on the right-hand side of the screen. This is the bands. [Oh if somebody wouldn't mind just checking they're on mute there]. So these are the pensionable pay bands here on the right side of the screen. These are the 2025/26

bands. They will be updated come April this year, so from the 1st of April 2026 they will be updated. They do always shift slightly each year. The contribution rate themselves, so 5.5%, 5.8%, and so on, they stay the same. But the pensionable pay bands you'll notice kind of shift upwards, just as you know pay rates go up and things like that.

So you'll notice that if you're very near the top of one of those pay bands, say, for example, you're on £28,000 per year, you'll see that that falls into the 5.8% band but it's just the very very top of it. So if that goes up at all, then you could - well you could find - or if your pay goes up slightly even from £28,000, you could find that you shift then into the 6.5% contribution band rate, but your employer should tell you from the 1st of April onwards whenever they assess everybody's contribution rate for the year ahead. They should tell you if your rate is going to be changing.

So you pay your employee contributions, as I say, your employer also does pay contributions on your behalf. For most employers in the Scheme they are in what we call the main group of scheme employers, which means that they have the same rate set. Most of them will be currently 19% of your pensionable pay per month. Some employers will have their own specific contribution rate applied to them. If you're not sure of your employer's contribution rate or you want to check it, you can check that directly with your employer, especially with your payroll department. If you struggle to get information from your employer, then you can come to us, and we can check it on our on your behalf on our system.

But certainly, for most employers they will currently be paying 19% of your pensionable pay per month on your behalf towards the Scheme.

So, that employee and employer contribution rate - we get the question a lot about how that relates to your actual pension benefits. So, the employee rate that you pay on per month, and the employer contribution rate that they pay on per month that is not what goes into your pension pot. That basically goes towards the upkeep of the Scheme and making sure that everyone can still avail of those benefits, including yourself, of redundancy protection, ill-health, and so on. So they go into the upkeep of the Scheme or the fund itself.

What actually gets added into your pension pot, as we'll come to look - a look in a further on slide, is that 1/49th of your pensionable pay each year gets added into your pension pot.

So just to avoid any confusion about the employee and employer contributions. They don't have a direct effect on your actual pensionable earnings and your pension that you're going to be claiming at the end from NILGOSC.

### **50/50 Section of the Scheme [19:00]**

We also have a 50-50 section of the Scheme so this is where you opt in to pay half the contributions and in turn you're going to build up pension at half the rate. So instead of paying 5.5% if you're - if you would have been in that band, you're now going to be paying 2.75% instead. [Sorry, somebody's just off mute there if you wouldn't mind muting yourself. I don't have the "Mute all" button available to me here, sorry].

So, your contribution rate, as you can see here, the bands are all just directly halved, so instead of 5.5% you have 2.75% and so on. So, you do have to opt into this 50/50 section, so you need to say to your employer "I wish to opt in", and there is a - form available on our website which needs to be filled out and sent into us to let us know that you want to go into the 50/50 section. Your employer does still pay the full rate. So, for example, most employers, as I say, are 19% currently for their employee or contributions each month. So your employer does still pay the full rate; their contribution rate doesn't get halved the same way that yours does.

As I say, because you're now paying half the contributions per month, you're building up pension at half the rate now. So, instead of 1/49th getting added into your pensionable - your pension pot each year, you're going to have 1/98th added into your pension pot per year. We do generally see the 50/50 section as being a short-term option. That's what it was kind of designed for, I suppose. Some people do stay in for a good bit longer than that but really it's designed so that, say for example, you're going through a period of financial uncertainty or financial hardship, and you can't keep up with your regular contributions of say 5.8% each month. It is a way of remaining in the Scheme, keeping your membership going, so keeping continuous membership in the pension scheme and still saving something towards your pension even if it's a lesser amount.

You can then rejoin the main section of the Scheme at any time, so go back to paying the full amount and getting the full amount of pension build-up each year. Again, you just need to go to your employer, and there's a wee form to fill in and send in to us to let us know you want to rejoin the main section. In the same way, you can go back into the 50 - 50/50 section if you want to in the future again.

Just to note, as I say, your pension does not build up as quickly in the 50/50 section so that's why we say it's a short-term option just to make sure that you're not going into the 50/50 section and then remaining in it for a long time because your pension build-up won't be as high.

### **How is my Pension Worked Out? [21:23]**

Moving on then to look at how your pension is actually worked out. So, currently in the Scheme since 1st of April 2015 onwards this is the way your pension has been worked out. So, it's your total pensionable pay for the year, divided by 49, and then that gets directly added into your CARE pension pot. An example there just with complete sample figures is somebody earning £20,000 per year. We divide that by 49 and we put £408.16 into your pension pot for that particular year. So in that year, your pensionable earnings are £408.16.

And I'll show you on the next slide what it looks like when that builds up year on year in your pension pot. If you're in the 50/50 section of the Scheme, of course, you're paying half the contributions per month; therefore, you're going to be building up half of the pension rate, so instead of your total pensionable pay for the year, divided by 49. You could see that's been halved too, divided by 98 instead. So, an example there, £20,000 divided by 98, gives that particular person an annual pension build-up of £204.08.

You will have a separate pension account for each employment, so if you are someone who, for example, works in a school and has multiple employments within that school then you could find that you have separate pension accounts separate pension records for each employment. Sometimes they will be brought together, aggregated, or combined, but you'll be told about that if that does happen or indeed if you have the choice for that to happen.

But for a lot of multi-jobbers, they just have a separate pension account and that's a separate little pension pot that's building up for each of those different employments based on your pensionable pay for that year in that employment divided by the 49 or the 98 if you're in the 50/50 section of the Scheme.

As I mentioned at the start, one of the benefits of being a scheme member is your pension account is increased each year in line with inflation as well. This is what it looks like, as I say, whenever it's building up year on year. So, this is a CARE pension pot. So, this is how everything has been calculated from 1st of April 2015 onwards. So you can see, for example, this particular sample member in Year 1 - of course they join the Scheme; they have an opening balance of £0 because they've just joined. They don't have any pensionable earnings yet. They - in that scheme year the employer tells us this person earned pensionable pay of £23,500. We take that, we divide it by 49. That person now has new pension savings for that year of £479.59, and that becomes their closing balance for that particular year.

Whenever they then come into Year 2, of course, they have their closing balance from the previous year. That becomes their opening balance for this particular scheme year. We apply a revaluation rate... that particular year was just 0.5%. That's where you see that accrual, that inflationary increase being applied to the benefits to keep them in line with inflation. So, they have £2.39 added to their - their opening balance straight away because of that inflationary increase. In that particular year you can see their pensionable pay rate went up. Instead of the £23,500, they now earned £29,500 in that particular year. Potentially they did a lot of overtime or they had a pay increase. Their new pension savings for that year is the £29,500, divided by 49. They get £602.45 build-up of pension. And then there's the £2.39 that's added to it as well as the £479.59. And you can see the closing balance they end up with at the end of Year 2 is the £1,084.44.

Okay, so you can see there as it goes up Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and so on. All completely dependent on their annual pensionable pay for that year, divided by 49, that accrual rate added to it to keep it in line with inflation, and added on to their previous opening balance from the previous year. And then at the end of Year 5, this person expects to end up with £3,054 in their pension pot. Now we'd expect this person to stay in the Scheme hopefully for longer than 5 years. They will continue to

keep building up every single year. So what we say is, from 1st of April 2015, the way that this is calculated, and your benefits are calculated each year... Every single year counts as you can see; the way it builds up year on year. For how many years you're in the Scheme you're going to be building up more and more pension in your pension pot.

So what then if you joined before 1st of April 2015. So anything up to that would have been what we called the final salary section of the Scheme. The final salary section of the Scheme meant that - for that whole period before 1st of April 2015, your benefits, your - your pension accrual didn't happen on a yearly basis. It was basically - all based on your final pay at the point of retirement. And at that point it was calculated for you. So it was based on your final pay at retirement, multiplied by the length of the membership you were in the Scheme for, divided by a - a divisor.

At one point, it was 80 and then, at another point, it was 60. So, completely different way of calculating your benefits which meant that for people who I suppose straddle the two different parts of the Scheme; the final salary scheme before April 2015 and the CARE scheme after April 2015, you will have two different ways that your benefits are calculated for you. Now we do those calculations on your behalf, so you don't have to worry too much about working it out yourself. Whenever you come to the point of retirement, we will know this person has final salary benefits to be calculated this way and this person also has CARE benefits to be calculated this way. And we will show you the two different calculations, as well, on your claim forms and your pension paperwork when you come to retire.

So if you were in the Scheme before 1st of April 2009, that was the final salary part of the Scheme. This is what we called the "80ths Scheme" or the 80th part of the final salary scheme. And the reason we called it that is because there was a divisor of 80 used.

That's all. So the way that your benefits would have been worked out for this part of the scheme would have been final pay at the point of retirement, multiplied by the length of membership in the scheme, divided by 80. And that gives us that annual pension figure attached to your benefits built up before 1st of April 2009. An example figure there £26,900. This person at their point of retirement was earning that. They were in the Scheme up to 1st of April 2009 for 5 years. So, we multiply it by five

years and then we divide it by that divisor of 80, and that gives them £1,682 of annual pension attached specifically to their pre 1st of April 2009 benefits.

Now, if you were in the Scheme before 1st of April 2009, as well as having that annual pension figure attached to that, you will also have had what we called an automatic lump sum or sometimes called a retirement grant. If you were in the Scheme before 1st of April 2009, you're probably aware that you have that lump sum already.

This was a lump sum that was automatically built up as part of that membership of the Scheme, and it's automatically paid at the point of retirement. The way that would have been worked out is final pay, multiplied by the length of membership of the Scheme up to 1st of April 2009, divided by 80, and multiply by three, and that gives you that lump sum figure. So, for this particular person on that pay rate of £26,900 at retirement, multiply by 5 years in the Scheme up to 1st of April 2009, divided by 80, multiply by three, and that gives them that automatic lump sum of £5,046. And that's a tax-free lump sum as well, so they get free of tax on that lump sum too.

Anyone that was in the Scheme after 1st of April 2009 won't have that automatic lump sum attached to their benefits. It's only membership before 1st of April 2009, so if you're in a Scheme after that and you didn't join until after 1st of April 2009, you'll notice you don't have an automatic lump sum attached to your benefits.

So the Scheme changed slightly again from 1st of April 2009 onwards up to the 31st of March 2015. It was still a final salary scheme, so your pension benefits were still just calculated at the point of your retirement based on your final pay. But what it meant now was, it was, what we call, the 60th part of the scheme, so the divisor changed from 80 to 60. So, you can see there that instead of divided by 80 it was your final pay multiplied by the length of your membership in the Scheme, divided by 60 and that gave you an annual pension attached to that part of your membership. So you can see there if you were a member that was in the Scheme before 1st of April 2009 and you're still active, you will see that you'll have several different parts of your membership basically that were split up. You'll have the pre 1st of April 2009 membership, April 2009 to 31st to March 2015 membership and then your CARE benefits building up each year from 1st of April 2015 onwards.

I will show you on the next couple of slides what that'll look like with sample figures for a person who has membership across all parts of the Scheme there. So, somebody who was in the Scheme before 1st of April 2009. all right. So we talk about membership as being kind of like tiers of a cake because it's kind of hard to understand sometimes with, you know, all of the terms being thrown around final salary, CARE, and so on. So some members will have all tiers of this cake here. Some members will only have certain tiers. Some members will only have one tier.

It all depends on your membership. When you first joined the Scheme and how long you've been in the Scheme for, as well. So, if you joined the Scheme of - before the 31st of March 2009 and you're still in it from the 1st of April 2015 onwards, you are somebody who would have every single tier of that cake. And that means that we need to work out all of those different tiers for your benefits in a particular way in a diff - in a different way. And you can see those 3 first tiers are all the final salary part up to the 31st of March 2015. And from 1st of April 2015 onwards is all CARE. And you can see there as well, the second tier of the cake, that kind of skinny tier is for people who were in the Scheme up to 31st to March 2009 and would be entitled to that automatic lump sum on top of their regular pension benefits as well - their annual pension benefits too.

So, just be having a look at that. Have a think to yourself if you know your membership date or roughly how long you've been Scheme for. How many tiers do you have as a member? Just so you know what - what your membership looks like, what your membership profile looks like, and how your pension is actually going to be calculated whenever you come to retire.

This is what it would look like with sample figures for a member who joined before 1st of April 2009, so they have been in the Scheme for all of those different sections so far. They were in the Scheme before 1st of April 2009, still in the Scheme up to 31st of March 2015, and then they're in the Scheme now under the CARE scheme from 1st of April 2015 onwards. So, this person would have had membership before 1st of April 2009, and attached to that membership, they have an annual pension build built up of £1,682. And they also have that automatic tax-free lump sum. For this particular person, it's £5,046. Then they were still in the Scheme whenever it changed slightly from the 1st of April 2009. That part of the Scheme they have

£2,242 attached - an annual pension to that particular period - and then whenever it came to the 1st of April 2015 whenever the Scheme shifted to a CARE scheme, they have £3,054 of pension built up in that part of the Scheme.

What that means is we calculate all those, add them together, and that gets added to the one annual pension figure payable to them at retirement. And for this particular person, it's then going to be £6,978 of pension per year. Of course, they still have that £5,046 of automatic tax-free lump sum payable at the point of retirement as well. So, that's kind of generally what it looks like there, as I say, we do all of the calculations for you and show that in your quotation paperwork when you come to retire. So it's not something that you need to necessarily worry about working out yourself.

But just understand that if you're in the Scheme for quite a while, you could have different - different parts of your membership that are worked out in slightly different ways.

### **Pension Options on Retirement [33:10]**

So then whenever you come to actually retire and take your pension benefits from us, what are your different options? So, the first one is to just take your standard benefits that are built up and that's where you - you know you wait until your normal pension age and you're taking your standard benefits that you've built up with the Scheme so far. So an example figure there is an annual pension of £6,978 plus the automatic lump sum if you were in the Scheme before 1st of April 2009. [excuse me] So that's the first option. You just take your standard annual pension that's payable to you for the rest of your life, every single year and then there's also that automatic lump sum. Now remember that lump sum is only a one-off. So once that's - that £5,046 for this particular person is spent, that's it gone whereas your pension itself is going to be payable for the rest of your life.

### **Conversion**

Your second option is to look at converting some of your annual pension figure into a tax-free lump sum. So this is an option that's available to all scheme members, so you can look at - so for this particular person with an annual pension figure of £6,978 per year they can look at giving up some of that £6,000 figure in order to get a bit

more of a tax-free lump sum. They already have an automatic tax-free lump sum of £5,000 being paid to them but if they want more, they can absolutely top that up by converting some of their annual pension into a tax-free lump sum. The way that works is £12 of tax-free lump sum can be bought for every £1 of pension given up. It is of course subject to HMRC tax limits.

And there's a maximum tax-free lump sum limit of 270 - £268,275. That's what it's currently set at.

So just be aware that - I don't think too many of us will have to worry about that - about hitting that lump sum limit but if you are a higher earner or you're looking, you know, at converting a lot of - a lot of annual pension to lump sum, then that is the upper limit there. Anything beyond that is going to be subject to tax and you'd need to speak to us about it. But certainly, for most people the conversion rate is just the £1 of pension given up buys you £12 of tax-free lump sum. It's a way of just - especially if you are somebody who didn't have membership of the Scheme before 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2009 and therefore don't have any automatic retirement grant or any automatic lump sum, you can then get - get a lump sum by converting some of your pension. So it is an option that's available there for everybody.

Just to note. as I say at the bottom of the slide there. the value of your lump sum may not replace the value of pension given up.

### Weigh up Options

So just make sure you weigh up your options. Make sure that if you're going to be giving up some of that, for example, £6,978 of annual pension figure for a lump sum, once that lump sum is spent, it is gone, and you are hoping to survive and live on that remaining, you know, whatever it is, £5,000 of pension that you're left with per year. So just make sure that you weigh up your options. You will be told your options at retirement whenever you come to claim your pension benefits from us. We will usually tell you "These are your standard benefits payable to you each year, and this is the maximum conversion that you can have to a lump sum." So we'll always give you the maximum lump sum option. You can then contact us and tell us if you want anything in between.

Sinead will also show us on the demonstration of My NILGOSC Pension Online how you can run calculations for yourself on the online platform and that can include - you can look at your conversion options there as well. There's a wee slider Sinead will show us of how you can look at "Well, if I want to take this much lump sum, how is that going to reduce my annual pension. I want my pension to go up to that amount instead, and this will put the lump sum down to this amount." So, Sinead will show us that as we come to it. This is what it looks like if you were to convert to the maximum lump sum, or this particular person with those sample figures I've used.

### Maximum Lump Sum Option

So there is the option to convert to the maximum lump sum possible, and that's where you're going to give up as much of your annual pension as possible to buy as much of a lump sum as possible - a tax-free lump sum as possible. So that particular person, I'm just using the same sample figures carrying through from the previous slides. This person has an annual pension of £6,978. That's their standard pension benefits payable to them at retirement. They also have a standard lump sum payable to them of £5,046 because, remember, they joined the Scheme before 1st April 2009. So that's always going to be part of their benefits.

This person is looking at their annual pension figure of £6,978 and thinking, you know what, I'm happy enough to give up as much of that as possible to buy as much lump sum as I possibly can. They opt for the maximum lump sum conversion. What that will look like with the conversion rate is a tax-free lump sum now of £31,708 from what they've converted in annual pension. Their reduced annual pension, because of course they've converted a good portion of it, is going to be £4,756. And then finally, as you can see in the purple box, remember this person joined before 1st of April 2009; still has that automatic lump sum attached to those benefits of £5,046.

That lump sum doesn't get touched or affected by the conversion rate. It's a completely separate tax-free lump sum that's paid whenever you convert your pension. That person will still have that standard lump sum payable to them of the £5,000. So you can see there how the annual pension figure has gone down from £6,978 down to £4,756. But in turn, because they've given up pension for lump sum, they're also getting a tax-free lump sum of £31,078 payable to them at retirement. So

again, just remember that that value may not replace the value of the pension that you've given up for the lump sum.

Remember to weigh up your options whenever you do come to retire. If you're looking at the lump sum option, make sure that you're happy enough that with that reduced annual pension figure, you can make do on that whenever your lump sum is gone and used up.

And again, just remember that that standard lump sum shown on the screen there with a sample figure of £5,046 only applies to pre 1st of April 2009 members, okay? So, if you joined after that, you'll note that you don't have any standard lump sum or retirement grant attached to your benefits.

### **How can I Increase my Pension? [38:57]**

Moving on then to look at how you can increase your pension benefits. So, you know, you - you have your standard pension benefits that are going to be payable to you at retirement. But if you're looking at your standard benefits payable to you and thinking, "I'd like a bit more and I would like to pay more to get more pension." you can absolutely do that. There are two different options for that. The first one is additional pension contributions or APCs. These are paid by you to NILGOSC directly. Or there's the AVCs option which is the additional voluntary contributions. These are paid to our AVC provider, our in-house AV - AVC provider, which is called Prudential. So, I'll go through on each slide now, on the next few slides in detail what the two different options look like and what they mean for you.

#### **Additional Pension Contributions**

Firstly, the APCs, the additional pension contributions. With the APC contract, if you sign up to that, you're paying it directly to NILGOSC, the additional contributions attached to it. You pay additional contributions and through those you can buy up to £8,823 of extra pension for yourself. The reason I say for yourself there is just to note that this extra pension is only for you. So if you were to pass away, that extra pension you've bought through an APC contract would not increase the benefits of any survivors, any children's pensions, spousal pensions or death grant. So only for you to benefit from whenever you retire as part of your pension.

You pay by regular contributions or by lump sum to NILGOSC, so you can choose through the APC contract whenever you first sign up for it. You can choose I want to pay £100 extra per month for the next 5 years, and this is going to buy me this amount of additional pension; you'll be told the guaranteed amount of additional pension that you will be buying whenever you come to retire. Or you can choose the lump sum option, so you can say "I have £500. I just want to put this into my additional pension contributions, and pay it in one lump sum to NILGOSC, and that's going to buy me this amount of additional pension whenever I retire."

You do know upfront with an APC how much pension is being purchased, which is quite good. So you know you're guaranteed that amount of additional pension. If we tell you, you pay this amount per month as part of this contract for the next 10 years and you're going to get this amount of additional pension whenever you retire added on top of your standard pension benefits. So you know that upfront. So there's that kind of the security of that. The cost of the APC contract is based on your age at the time that you take it out and the length of the contract, so how long it's going to be going on for.

It's also based on a Good Health Medical that you do need to go through. That Good Health Medical check is done by one of our independent medical practitioners. The current price for that is about £177. That can change per - per scheme year.

Certainly, up to the 31st of March, it's going to be that kind of £177ish figure there. You do have to cover that figure yourself. You do have to pay for the Good Health Medical yourself. The reason that the Good Health Medical is required for an APC contract is that if you were to retire on the grounds of ill-health, as you have the option to as a scheme member, and your APC contract wasn't fully paid up yet, it's treated as fully paid up if you retire on the grounds of ill-health. So, we do need to make sure that you're in good health and you're not likely to be retiring on the health - on the grounds of good of ill-health before the APC contract is going to be paid in full. So that's why you do need to do a Good Health Medical. If you pass that, you can absolutely go ahead and apply for the APC.

Your employer can choose to contribute towards the cost of your APC as a shared cost APC, that's what it's called. That is at your employer's discretion, so it's completely up to themselves, whether or not they will do that. Usually, your employer

will have a policy internally on that as to when they will contribute towards a shared cost APC or when they won't.

You can also use an APC to buy lost pension, to cover a period when you weren't building up any pension within the Scheme. That can be due to periods of strike action, periods of unpaid leave, etc. So, if you know that you had a period of strike action, for example, in the past and you didn't cover it, you can use an APC, an additional pension contribution contract to cover that.

I'll show you on the website the two different options for a - buying an APC or paying an APC to boost pension and buying an APC to cover lost pension. So there's two different places to go into for each of those functions. The way that you apply for an APC is you apply via an LGS27A form. And again, I'll show you on the website in a few minutes where you can get all of our forms from. Just to note, as well, that that Good Health Medical is not required if you're just buying the APC to cover lost pension due to something like strike or unpaid leave; you don't have to worry about the Good Health Medical in that - in that regard. But if you're buying the APC to cover - to buy additional pension, to boost your pension, then you do have to pass that Good Health Medical check. So that was the APCs option.

### **Additional Voluntary Contributions**

They're payable directly to NILGOSC. The AVCs option is slightly different. These are extra contributions paid by you through a contract to our in-house AVC provider, Prudential. Whenever you pay those regular contributions to Prudential, they invest those on your behalf. Okay, so they invest them in the market, and you get returns on your investment. Note that with AVCs, you can't pay via lump sum. You can only pay by regular contributions to - to Prudential. So the lump sum option is not there for AVCs, whereas with the APCs, you can put a whole lump sum in at a time or pay monthly contributions. But with AVCs, you can only do the regular contributions. With an AVC, you can contribute up to the level of your pay, less your employer deductions in any pay period. And you do get tax relief on your APC and AVC contributions. So they are taken from your pay before you get taxed. So you do get that tax relief, so, you know, you pay a certain amount in, but actually you're only paying a slightly lesser amount because really the tax hasn't been taken off your pay yet.

You build up an AVC fund with your contributions and the returns on your investments, so it's kind of like a separate little pension pot that you build up with the AVC fund with the contributions you've paid and then those returns that you're getting on your investment. You do choose your investment options whenever you take the AVC contract out with the Prudential, and the level of risk you want attached to it, and I believe you can change that level of risk as you - as you choose. You would just need to log onto your online platform with Prudential and tell them that you want to change your level of risk at any point. So, you could start out, you know, with quite a high level of risk when you're a bit younger and then as you get older, you may want to lower the level of risk with your investments.

You can use your AVC build-up at retirement to buy additional pension, or you can take it as cash at retirement. That of course is going to be subject to the same lump sum tax rules of that £268,275 tax-free lump sum limit. So just be aware of that. But you do, certainly, with AVCs have that option of additional pension, or you can take it as a tax-free lump sum altogether whenever you retire. Just remember with an AVC as opposed to an APC, it is an investment, so the value of your fund can go up or down. So just be aware of that. With every investment comes that level of risk. Whereas with the APC contract that we mentioned on the previous slide, you are buying a guaranteed amount of additional pension there, so you're guaranteed that amount that we tell you you're going to get whereas with the investment side of the AVCs you're not necessarily guaranteed a specific amount. So just to note that. You apply for an AVC via Prudential's website, and I will show you very quickly in a few minutes whenever I come off to show you the website, where you go to get onto the Prudential's website to apply for an AVC.

### **Leaving the Scheme before Retirement [46:30]**

If you are looking at leaving the Scheme before retirement, so before your normal retirement age when you would be looking to take your benefits out. If you've got less than two years membership in the Scheme and you then leave, you would be entitled to a refund of contributions, so you'd be expecting your contributions that you've paid up to that point towards the scheme; you'd be expecting a refund of those back to yourself.

## 2 Years Scheme Membership

If you leave the Scheme before retirement and you were in the Scheme for more than two years before you left, you would be entitled then to deferred benefits; you wouldn't have an entitlement to a refund of contributions; it would just be the deferred benefits. What a deferred benefit means is that your pension account is effectively closed at the point that you leave the Scheme. Those pension benefits are held within the Scheme for you until you reach the point of retirement where you can take them. Your pension that you have accumulated gets increased each year in line with inflation.

So I mentioned at the start there, a benefit of being a scheme member is even when you are a deferred member of the Scheme, and you're no longer actively paying into it, the pension benefits that are held within the Scheme for you until your retirement age are still getting that inflationary increase, so it's really good. You can choose to transfer your benefits out to another pension provider, so you can choose rather than leaving them in the NILGOSC pension scheme up until retirement, you can choose to take them and transfer them to another pension provider if, for example, you've joined another pension scheme through another employer. That will be dependent on the - the rules around transfers for that future pension provider, so you'd need to check it with them.

If you do rejoin the Scheme after you've left, and you had deferred benefits in the Scheme - kind of frozen -, you may have the option to aggregate your two pension pots. So that just means that your two pension pots would become the one pension pot. We would always write out to you and let you know that that's happening or that you have the option to do that if you rejoin the Scheme, and there are benefits that are previously held in the Scheme for you. So that is an option there for you too.

## Types of Retirement [48:19]

Moving on then to look at some of the different types of retirement.

### Normal Retirement

So firstly, looking at normal retirement, early retirement and late retirement. So normal retirement is of course just like your normal pension age. So for most people, as I say, that's going to be, you know, your state pension age, so say 66, 67, 68, or

so on. If you're ever uncertain about your state pension age and you don't know what it is, you can check on gov.uk. They have a whole section about their - about the state pension and the state pension age. So you can check there and get your state pension age to get an idea of when your NILGOSC pension benefits will be payable as well to you. So normal retirement it is payable at normal pension age. That means that you wait until, you know, 68, 67 or so, and your pension benefits are paid to you without any reduction for early retirement.

## Early Retirement

You also have the option to retire early. You can retire early from the Scheme and take your scheme benefits from the age of 55 onwards. Now, the reason I have a star there next to 55 is just to note that that is the minimum normal pension age currently. That minimum normal pension age is going to be increasing to 57 from April 2028. So just be aware of that, especially if you're somebody, who's turning 55 soon or in the next couple of years and you're looking to retire early from 55. That is going to increase to 57 from April 2028, which basically just means that from the 1st of April 2028, you'll only be able to take early retirement from the age of 57 onwards.

If you do take early retirement, whilst it is an option there, just weigh up your options, make sure that you're - you're aware of the reductions that would be applied to your pension benefits. The reason that we need to reduce them slightly is because they're going to be paid out for longer than we expected. And remember, your NILGOSC pension benefits are payable for the rest of your life. So it's going to cost - it's going to cause a wee bit of a strain on the fund to be paying those out for the rest of your life for longer than we expected - earlier than we expected. So we're going to have to reduce them slightly for you. The inverse of that is if you do - if you choose to stay on and keep paying into the Scheme after your normal retirement age of say 67, 68 or so on, then instead of actuarial reductions being applied, you're going to expect actuarial increases applied because you're staying on after your normal pension age, and we are paying your pension out for potentially a shorter time than we expected to be.

## Late Retirement

Just note that if you're looking at the late retirement option, your benefits do have to be taken from the NILGOSC pension scheme before age 75, so you can't remain as

an active member of the pension scheme after the age of 75 onwards. Just to show you on the grid here, and this grid is available on our website as well, under the Retirement section for members. This is what it looks like if you were to look at retiring early. Now, these reductions won't necessarily mean a lot to you as they currently look on the screen but just so you're aware of kind of how - how they - how they work, dependent on the number of years that your pension is going to be paid early to you.

So, for example, if you had a normal pension age of 68 and you're looking to go at the age of 66 instead, you would then be expecting to face 2 years of the early retirement reductions. So that's that second part of the grid there or that second line of two years. You're looking at your annual pension figure that's payable to you at retirement being reduced by 10%. And you're looking at, if you have a lump sum attached to your benefits; so if you joined before 1st April 2009 and you have an automatic lump sum, you'd be looking at that lump sum being reduced as well for early retirement at 3% for 2 years early. And you can see there, you know, if you're going up to, you know, 10 years early, so looking at, you know, age of 58 and you wouldn't usually be due to get your pension benefits paid to you until 68, then you're going to be facing high enough reductions on your pension.

Don't worry too much about having to work them out from this grid. Sinead will be showing us the demo of My NILGOSC Pension Online and she'll show you how you can run calculations for yourself there. And those calculations will take into account if you're putting in an early earlier - an earlier date of retirement than your normal retirement date. So that will always - those reductions will always be - will always be taken into account whenever you're running online calculations for yourself.

## **Flexible Retirement**

Looking at some of the different types of retirement as well. Flexible retirement really popular option under the Scheme. It is available to all scheme members. It is available from the age of 55, that normal minimum pension age but, again, remember that is going to be rising to 57 from April 2028. Flexible retirement is always to do with your employer's consent. Your employer does have the kind of discretion to consent to you flexibly retiring or not. So you do need to speak to your

employer in the first instance about, you know, when they support flexible retirement, in what scenarios they do it.

You do have to reduce your working hours or your grade as part of flexible retirement. Your employer can also have additional requirements. They can say, you know, your hours do have to be reduced by at least 40%, or your pay grade has to be reduced by one grade, or so on. So your employer may have very specific instructions there around flexible retirement. But certainly, the general - the general requirements for flexible retiring are that you must either reduce your working hours or your grade.

You do have to have at least two years of qualifying membership in the Scheme to qualify for flexible retirement as well, so just be aware of that that you're - if you're only in the Scheme for, you know, a couple of months, or a year, or so, you do need to be in the Scheme for at least two years to avail of flexible retirement.

Whenever you do come to flexibly retire, you can choose to draw either some or all of the benefits that you've built up. Note there that you can't choose to draw none of the benefits. You do have to draw some of your pension that you've built up so far. What you do have to take is if you were in the Scheme before 1st of April 2009 and you've built up benefits in that part of the Scheme, you have to take everything built up to 1st of April 2009. Plus, then, you can choose whether you want to take all, some, or none of your benefits built up after 2009; so anything built up between 2009 and 2015, and anything built up after 2015.

The way flexible retirement works then is that you reduce your hours or your grade. You take some of your pension benefits. You remain in work with that employer and in the Scheme building up further pension until you fully retire at your normal pension age or slightly before that if you choose to go early. That's unless you choose to opt out. So you can choose to flexibly retire, take your benefits, and then opt out of the Scheme and not be building up further pension after that, based on your new - your new kind of reduced hours or reduced grade employment. Your benefits are reduced if you're under the age - if you're under normal pension age.

So just note that the early retirement reductions do still come in there to flexible retirement because you're still going to be accessing some of your pension benefits earlier than we expected you to. And again, if you go past your normal pension age

and then choose to flexibly retire, they're increased, so we apply those actuarial increases because we're paying them out later than we expected to pay them out.

And again, just note that you can't choose to draw none of your benefits from the Scheme, whenever you do come to flexibility retire; you do have to take something.

### **Redundancy or Business Efficiency**

Another type of retirement is redundancy or business efficiency. So, just to note that this - one of the benefits of being a scheme member is that you have that redundancy or business efficiency retirement protection. Your benefits are payable immediately if you are made redundant, and you have over two years of qualifying membership, and you're over the age of 55. Again, that's going to change to 50 - 57 from April 2028. If you are in the Scheme and you're made redundant and you haven't reached the age of 55 yet, instead of getting your benefits immediately paid out to you, you will be entitled to deferred benefits instead, and they'll remain in the Scheme for you and they'll be payable at your normal pension age.

So, it depends on what age you are. It depends if you're over the age of 55 or not, when you're made redundant. Your employer meets the cost of the early payment of your benefits in the - in the event of you being made redundant, so you don't have to worry about facing any reductions for the early payment of benefits at all. Your employer can also choose to award you with additional pension. It's additional pension of up to £8,823 per year. That's the current figure and that generally changes each year, each scheme year. That is at their discretion, so they can choose to do that. They should have a policy, a discretionary policy on that written that they can discuss with you, if, in the case of redundancy so that they can say whether or not that's going to be payable to you.

And as I say, if you're under the age of 55, your redundancy benefits aren't going to be paid immediately to you. But you will be entitled to them being paid to you as deferred benefits whenever you reach your normal pension age.

### **Ill-Health Retirement**

Another type of retirement is ill-health retirement. I mentioned ill-health a good bit at the start there, so we don't have to go into too much detail about it. But ill-health retirement, available as a benefit of the pension scheme if you find yourself in the

position where you can no longer work due to ill-health. It is payable at any age, so even if you're under the age of 55, you don't have to worry about that. It - it just comes down to a two years of scheme membership being needed and be - being assessed by one of our - one of NILGOSC's independent registered medical practitioners.

Your benefits are not reduced for early payment as well, so, just to note that that you don't face any reductions for early payment or your benefits if it's because of ill-health. They're just paid immediately to you. There is a two-tier system, I mentioned that at the start there. So, you're assessed by one of our independent medical practitioners, one of our independent doctors. There is a two-tier system applied, so if they say, right, you are suitable for ill-health retirement, you're getting tier one ill-health retirement. Tier one is the highest tier, which means that A), you receive all of the pension benefits you've built up in the Scheme to that point of retirement, and B), you also are entitled to an enhancement of 100% of the pension benefits that you would have been expected to build up in the Scheme if you hadn't had to retire early due to ill-health.

Tier two then is, you still get paid all of the pension benefits immediately that you've built up to that point to retirement, but because it's the second tier, it's a slightly lesser tier. Instead of the 100% enhancement on what you could have expected to build up in the Scheme to retirement, you get 25% enhancement on those benefits you would have expected to build up. The reason the tiers are slightly different and how you fall into one tier or the other is tier one, as I mentioned at the start, is where you're considered unlikely to be capable of undertaking any gainful employment before your normal pension age.

Whereas tier two is, you're considered likely to become, at some point before your normal pension age, capable of undertaking some gainful employment. So it just means you're assessed by the independent medical practitioner and they dep - they - they determine whether you fall into tier one or tier two. If ill-health retirement is something that you are interested in or something that you feel you may need to benefit from, you need to speak to your employer about that, and your employer needs to fill in a form and let us know on your behalf that you're looking to get assessed for ill-health retirement.

## **Annual Pension Benefit Statements [59:06]**

Just a wee bit about pension benefit statements. Everyone should have hopefully received their pension benefit statement by the 31st of August this year. If you haven't and you think you should have gotten a benefit statement, please do let us know. They are issued annually by the 31st of August every single year. Please do check that your saved pension is correct for the last year, so, check that your pension figure looks correct, so, check your pensionable pay figure that your employer has given us. That should be listed on your annual benefit statement.

If your pensionable pay figure looks incorrect, if it looks too high or too low, please do let your employer know and make sure that we're - that we're made aware of it because remember it's your pensionable pay figure for the year, divided by 49 that gets added into your pension pot. So, if we have an inflated figure of pay or a deflated figure of pay, you're going to be banking the wrong pension for that particular year.

So let us know immediately if you see any errors at all.

## **Death and Survivors' Benefits [01:00:01]**

A wee bit about death and survivors' benefits. So the Scheme does provide protection for your family in the event of your death.

### **Survivor's Pension**

There is the survivor's pension firstly, which is payable to any spouse, or civil partner, or cohabiting partner. That is going to be payable to that person - that person for the rest of that person's life. So that survivor's pension is there for that person. Please do make sure that if you are married, so you have a spouse, or you have a civil partner, or you have a cohabiting partner, do make sure that we know about that - that we know that you have that partner or spouse because if not we will assume that there's no survivor's pension payable in the event of your death. That - that part of the pension that - that part of the death benefits is only payable if we know if - if you have a spouse, or civil partner, or cohabiting partner.

## Child's Pension

Child's pension then is the other part of the death and survivors' benefits. This is payable to any eligible children that remain in the event of your death. And I'll go on - on the next slide into what is an eligible child just so you're aware. That is going to be payable to that child for the duration of their eligibility, so for however long they keep meeting those eligibility criteria. And those eligibility criteria are these. So, an eligible child, what that is, is anything or anyone that includes a natural or adopted child, a stepchild or a child that is accepted by you, the deceased, as a member of your family; providing that they're dependent on you at the date of your death.

So, if they meet any of those three bullet points **[referring to on-screen slide]**, and then they must also meet one of these bullet points at the bottom of the screen here. They must be either under the age of 18, over the age of 18 and less than 23 and in full-time education, or physically or mentally impaired. So, they do have to meet those three bullet points as well as one of the three bullet points in the top of the screen there, okay? So, just be aware if you do have children or a child that you deem to be, you know, your - your adopted child, or an accepted child, or a dependent, then just be sure of whether or not they would be deemed to be an eligible child in the event of your death. Of course, that eligibility can change over time, as you know, that child gets older and maybe starts to fall outside of the range of eligibility and so on.

## Lump Sum Death Grant

The third part of the death and survivors benefits available to all members of the pension scheme is the lump sum death grant. This is the death grant that I mentioned at the start, which is payable to any nominated beneficiary that you choose, and you can nominate several beneficiaries for this. It is equal to three times your assumed pensionable pay, so roughly three times your - your pensionable salary for the year. It's adjusted if you're part-time. Just to note that you nominate, who you would like to receive the death grant in the event of your death.

The way you do that is either via - either via My NILGOSC Pension Online platform or there's a wee form you can fill in on our website, which I'll show you where that is in case you can't use the online platform. This is what we call nominating your beneficiaries and that's for that death grant. You can choose, as I say, several

beneficiaries. NILGOSC does retain ultimate discretion on who ultimately receives that death grant. The reason we say this is because we need to make sure it's going to the right person. We will always try to make sure that we - in - at all possible, we'll always make sure that we pay it to whoever you want to be paid to, but we do have to hold ultimate discretion to make sure it's going to the right person.

As I say, Sinead is going to show us where you can record your nominated beneficiaries on the online platform or there is that form that I'll show you where that is at our website that you can fill in either. Make sure that you keep your nominated beneficiaries list updated as things change, so, for example, if your marital circumstances change, and you had your partner on as a nominated beneficiary and you no longer want them to be a nominated beneficiary, make sure you change it and update it because, of course, the nature of things is we don't know when things are going to change; unfortunately, we don't know when we're going to pass away, so, you want to make sure that things are right and the right person is going to be getting the - the money in the event of your death.

### **NILGOSC Website Resources [01:03:39]**

At this point, I'm going to come on to the NILGOSC website just to show you a few things. Firstly, I'm going to show you how to apply for APCs, the additional pension contributions. I'll show you how to apply for the AVCs, the additional voluntary contributions. I also want to show you the Member Resources area where you can get a lot of the forms that I want to mention there. And then Sinead is going to come on to the My NILGOSC Pension Online demo for us. And then we'll have just a few more slides at the very very end which should take us up to about half - about half past. And then we'll have time for questions, verbal questions at the very end, okay.

So, I'm going to come out of the slideshow now and go on to our NILGOSC website. So, this is our NILGOSC website here. So our website is [nilgosc.org.uk](http://nilgosc.org.uk) and there's huge amount of resources on this website. You know, I could spend all day showing you the website and the different resources that are available. Unfortunately, we don't have time today. But there is specific areas for members, specific areas for members who left the Scheme but are now deferred, specific area for pensioners and for employers, and so on.

If you're ever unsure about where to find something on the website, if you go to the More options dropdown and just enter a search term there like pensionable pay and you'll come up with lots of different search results, and it means that you don't have to worry too much about finding the specific area on the website.

What I'll show you first is our Resource Library for members. So again, I'm just going in via nilgosc.org.uk, going to More options, that wee dropdown. Under Resource Library there's Member resources. If I click in here and scroll down. On the left-hand side here, lots of different member resources. I want to go into Forms for members just to show you where to get our forms. So if ever you're asked by your employer or by us directly to fill in a form and send it into us, for whatever reason, this is where you'll get it, okay. So there's that LGS20 Expression of Wish form where you would be nominating your death grant beneficiaries.

For a lot of people they don't need that anymore because a lot of people are on the online platform now, and Sinead's going to show us how to actually do it via that platform instead of having to send us in a form. But all our different forms are in here for members, so if you're, as I say, if you're ever asked if, for example, you want to opt out of the Scheme, your employer should be able to tell you where to go for the Opt Out form, and that's where you go for it there to opt out. Opting back in, there's also the form there, too. Down here, you have that that LGS27A form, which is for applying for an APC contract to boost your - your pension benefits. So, all your member forms are in there. If you ever have trouble finding them and you need a form, please do let us know, and we can always send it out to you directly or we can post forms out if you need a - a physical copy of it.

### **Website Section APCs**

Last thing I want to show you in the website is just where to go to apply for the APC or AVC contracts. So, if we go into the Members section and then across the top here, you'll see lots of different tabs. There is a tab for specifically Boosting your pension. If we go into that, scroll down, it'll show you the different options here. Additional pension contributions. That's the APCs paid directly to NILGOSC. Go into that and you can read lots of information there about APCs. The amount that you can buy an additional pension per year currently which is set at £8,823. Looking down the page, there are lots of FAQs. So, How do I apply? How much does the

Good Health Medical cost? When are they paid and things like that. What I want to show you here is how to apply for one. So if you're interested in the APC contract, what you need to do to apply for it is - the first thing you need to do is to use the APC calculator and that's available on our website here, just this wee link.

If I click into this, there is going to be two sections of the calculator. One is for buying Additional Pension with an APC. The other is for buying Lost Pension with the APC. Remember the APC is also used or can also be used to buy or cover lost pension due to strike action, or unpaid leave, and so on. If you're looking at buying extra pension, that's the one I'm going to show you here because the buying lost pension is much the same. Go into Quote and Apply This will bring up the APC calculator. Give you a bit of information here about filling it in. You need to put in your personal details here, gender, date of birth, the section of the Scheme you're in, and whether it's the main section or 50/50 and so on. Then it'll ask you whether you want to look at regular payments of contributions for your APC contract or a lump sum payment of contribution for your APC contract. You'll put in the information there. You'll click Get results, depending on whether you're going for regular or lump sum. When you click that, you should see this - these fields here populating with the results.

You'll be told this is the amount of additional pension you want to buy. This is the amount or this is how long you're going to be paying the additional contributions for. And it'll tell you this is how much it's going to cost you ultimately overall to buy that amount of additional pension. If you're happy enough with that.

If you're not happy enough with it, you can reset the quote and put in, you know what actually, I just want to put a lump sum in or no, I'm actually going to pay £50 a month instead of 100 pounds a month. You can run as many quotations on this for yourself as you would like. This is not an application for it. This is just the calculator part of it. This is just getting a quote for yourself, so, don't worry. You can, as I say, run as many as you want. You don't have to worry about that being an official application.

If you're happy enough with the quote, you can choose to print it. You can - fill in your application details down here. So you're filling that in if you actually do want to; if you're happy enough with the results and you're saying, "Yes, I want to apply for the APC contract!", fill in your information here. Just tick that box to make sure you understand the terms and conditions. And, you can choose Print application if you

want to print a PDF version of it. Or you can print and download it, and - and get it printed out for you physically into a physical copy. Now, that is the first step of applying for one, so if you're happy enough, you apply down here and then go through the printing the application and saving a copy of your quote for yourself.

Then, what you need to do is also fill in a form. And the form is available back in the page that I showed you before on our website. It's that LGS27A form, I believe. So, yeah, LGS27A form, and it's actually linked there for you already, so you don't have to go elsewhere on the website to find it. So, you can fill in the LGS27A form. And you need to put that along with a copy of your APC calculator as well, and your quote from that. And that's how you apply for an APC contract.

### **Website Section AVCs**

Now, just to show you very quickly where you go to apply for an AVC contract. If I go back, oh, that's going to take me back that way. Let me see if I go right back to the APC screen and then back to the Boosting your pension screen. So, additional voluntary contributions are AVCs. So they're the slightly different option where instead of paying directly to NILGOSC, you're paying additional contributions to Prudential, our AVC provider. So if you scroll down here, it'll give you lots of information about AVCs, It'll give you some FAQs, and it'll also show you how do I contribute to an AVC. So should you wish to explore this option, go to this link here.

This will bring up their Prudential's website. And scrolling down, they will ask you to put in your LGPS name. That's your Local Government Pension Scheme name. For yourselves, it's going to be the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee, aka NILGOSC. So, if I scroll down, I'll find them here Click on that. Find your employer from the list. Now, a lot of employers aren't actually on this drop-down list. If you can't find them, don't worry. Just click Employer Not Listed. And then proceed. That will then bring you through to the Local Government Pension AVC's part of the Prudential's website, which is where you want to be because you're a Local Government Pension Scheme member.

If you're a new customer looking to apply, you apply for an AVC plan through there. If you're an existing customer and you have an AVC pot already with Prudential, then you can go in and look at, you know, changing our contribution rate and things like

that. So, that is how you apply for the AVC via Prudential's website. So they are both available.

Both of those different functions for APCs and AVCs are available on our website, alright. Again, just make sure that you're using the website if you're a member because it's really really good wealth of information that's available on the website there for all members and for - for employers as well.

Right, at this point I'm going to stop sharing and I'm going to hand over to Sinead, my colleague, and Sinead is going to take us through a demonstration of the My NILGOSC Pension Online platform. After that, please do hold on if you can so that we can get through the last few slides and then we will have time for questions at the very end, okay.

## **Demonstration of My NILGOSC Pension Online [01:11:42]**

[Thank you Leah]. **Sinead:** As Leah said I'm going to take you through the My NILGOSC Pension Online portal.

### **Registration Process**

So - how - first of all show you how you to register if you haven't already. So, if you just go to our website, the homepage, which is nilgosc.org.uk. And you can see up the top here, we've got Register or Sign in. So, if we click on Register, it'll give you a couple of different options here. If you've never registered before, you can click this bottom option. It'll tell you what you need. It'll ask you to accept the terms and conditions and click Let's begin. And what all you need to do really is just put in your surname, your date of birth, and your national insurance number.

Now, if we hold your email address on our files, then what will happen is you'll get an email with a link in it and you click on that link to complete your registration.

If we don't have an email address on file for you, what will happen is we'll post you out a letter with an activation key on it. And whenever you receive that letter - it should only take a couple of days -, you go back into the same place that you went, click that you understand the terms and conditions, and instead of clicking the Let's begin button, you click the I have an activation key. And it - it's asking you for very

similar information, your surname, your date of birth, your national insurance number, and then you simply type in the activation key that we'll have provided you on the letter - and it just bypasses that email part - and click Submit. And that gets you online.

## **First Impressions of Revamped Dashboard**

So, I'm going to log in here. We have a demonstration account set up. So, this is what the Dashboard looks like whenever you log in. So, as you can see, there's various tiles here. Now, depending on what type of a member you are, yours might look slightly different. They're personalised for each group of members. So if you're an active member, you might also have deferred records, you might also have a pensioner record. You may see some different things here. This one that we've set up - this person is an active member and also a deferred member. So, I'll do is - just take a quick whizz around. You might notice if you ha - if you registered several years ago and you haven't been on for a while, you might notice it looks a bit different. So in February last year, we got an upgrade to the system. So if you haven't been on; you registered previously; you haven't been on a while. If you log back on again, you can see it looks a bit different.

## **Documents and Uploads Tile**

So, what I'll go through first is, we have this section here, which is Documents and uploads. So, if you go in there, there's three sections. There's a section where there's files that we've sent to you. So what you'll be able to see in there is, for example, this person has their membership pack. So, if you joined the Scheme, we've sent you a letter saying, "Go online, register, and look for your membership pack." This is where you'll find it. Depending on your type of membership, there might be other things in there, too. If you have AVCs, there might be AVC reports in there and letters. There could be various different things in there. But that's where you can find anything that we have sent to you.

If you want to send anything to us, you can upload it through here. So, there may be times where we ask you for your birth certificate, maybe your marriage certificate. If your circumstances have changed, you can simply upload that to us here. You don't need to post us things anymore. This is a totally secure system. Sometimes if you send things by email, we can't guarantee it's secure, but if you upload it through

here, it goes straight to our administration system; totally secure. So, you can either choose a file from your computer or if you don't have it saved in the computer, you can take a picture of it on your phone and then just click Upload files, and it'll ask you what employment is it for if you've got more than one pension pot with us. If you've only got one job, it will just prepopulate, and then you just simply browse the files and upload it. So, that's how you can upload things to us.

And then this section here, is just you can find our scheme documents and forms, similar to what Leah showed you on the website.

### **Annual Benefit Statement Tile**

Okay, so the next section I'm going to show you, is your annual benefit statement tile. This is really important. This is where - over the summer we will send you either an email or a letter to say that your benefit statement's online and to go and have a look at it. And this is where we're asking you to go. So once again, with the new portal that we have, if you've got more than one job, you can click - you'll see that there's a little arrow and you can click in here. As you can see, this person is a Payroll Manager from the 1st of July 2008 until present. And they also have a deferred record. They were also an Administration Officer from 2000, and then they finished that in 2008. So, you might - everybody else, everybody's will look different. You might only have one job, you might have several. So, you can choose which job you want to look at, and you can also choose your statements. So, it's really handy.

All your statements are saved in one place on your online account. So, what we're basically trying to do with a pension benefit statement is it's a once a year value of this is how much your pension is worth. It's always at - as at the 31st of March. So this one here, if you go on and look today, it'll be as at the 31st of March 2025. The summer coming, we'll give you one for the 31st of March 2026. So what we're trying to get you to look at here is there's - you can see there's three different sections.

So we've got your Pension forecast as the first one. So this is telling you that when you're due to retire, and for this person, as you can see, it's 67. Yours might be different depending on your state pension age. You're on course to receive a pension of - this person's just over £13,500 a year. And that'll give you a monthly income of and it'll populate. So obviously, everybody's is going to be different. So this is what we're just trying to get you to look at in this section. There's loads of information in

here as well. If you see throughout the site, there's these little arrows, and you can drop down and all the - there's loads of information in there.

But the base information we're asking you to look at up here is just - is this figure here. This is what you're on course to receive if nothing changes, if your salary stays the same, if you just keep in the Scheme and the same job, same salary.

The next section then up here is your Pension breakdown. So what this is showing you is - this is the current value of your pension as at the 31st of March. So, as you can see now, we're sort of nearly a year out of date, but this is at the 31st of March last year. So you can see here how much your pension has increased by in the last year. So, that's where Leah talked about, you know, the 1/49th of your salary, and that gets banked into your pension pot. That should roughly show up there. This brings your current pension, too. For this person, it's just over £7,000 a year. And this person has a guaranteed tax-free lump sum of £2,800. And that's because, you may remember up here, in their job, they started this job in 2008.

So because they have membership before 2009, they have this automatic lump sum. If you joined after 2009, this won't show up for you. You just won't see it. So that's one of the other really good things about the site is it's all personalised to you. So if you look down here, we're - can show a dropdown of how we've calculated this figure of £7,000. And there's loads of information in here. You can see this person has Career Average benefits. So of the £7,000, £4,200 is Career Average. They also have membership between 2009 and 2015. So you can see £1,800 is from that. And then they also have membership pre 2009, so £949 is of that.

So, the only thing that will show up here for you is that relating to the membership you have. So if you only have Career Average benefits, you'll only see this top part. You won't see this bottom information, so it's all tailored to you. Again, there's loads of information in these breakdowns if you want to go through and read it that tells you how we've calculated these figures.

But, at a bare minimum if you can have a look at this top bit to tell you what your pension is currently worth.

And then the last bit that I want to show you on your benefit statement is your Death benefits. So, this is where Leah spoke there, there's two types of death benefits.

There's your lump sum death grant and there's the annual survivor's pension. So, God forbid, anything was to happen to you, you get a lump sum death grant of approximately three times your annual salary. So, if you go in here that'll tell you what that is for you. And this is the one where you can nominate who you want to receive this. So, this can be anybody. You can nominate this to family, friends, a charity, anybody at all.

And everybody gets that if you're unfortunate enough to die while you're in service. Then you also have this annual survivor's pension. So this is the part where it's only applicable if you're married, civil partner, or if you have an eligible child. If you - if we have on our records that you're single, divorced, or widowed, then this will say £0. So, it's a good idea if you are - if you do think you should have a survivor's pension, just go on and take a look; make sure there's a figure there. If it says £0, we might not know that you're married, or we might not know that you're in a civil partnership. So, good to go on and check and just let us know. Again, we've got loads more information in there if you want to read it.

### **Manage Beneficiaries Tile**

Okay, so what I'll do now is I'll show you how you nominate who you want to receive this lump sum death grant. So, I'll come back out of the Annual benefit statement tile and go in here to Manage beneficiaries. So it's really important that you fill this in and you let us know. Say if unfortunately, something was to happen to you, if we know your wishes, then we can go ahead and pay this. We don't want to have to be contacting your family and trying to find out information if something has happened.

So you could just go in here. As you can see, this person has two people nominated. They've got their wife and their son. They've got 90% going to their wife, 10% going to their son. You can add as many people as you want, as long as the values add up to 100%. So if you wanted to add a new person, you can click this Add beneficiary, and we simply ask for their name, their relationship you have with them, their date of birth, the percentage you want to give them, and their contact details in case we ever need to contact them. You can also go in if you want to look if you've already got two people - anybody nominated. You can click on the Edit button - and go in say, for example, Denise here has changed her phone number. You can go in and you can just change that and click Continue, and that will update it on our system. You can

also go in and delete if you want to take somebody off. You just click the Delete button and that will remove them for you.

So, really important. Once you've done that you can click then the confir - because I made a change there - . I'm just going to click Confirm and submit. And that - there you go. You've successfully updated your beneficiaries. And that will bring that straight onto your administration system. So, you can do that really quick and easily online.

If you can just log on and make sure we have your nominations in there, that would be great.

### **Benefit Calculators Tile**

So, the next thing I'm going to show you, this is probably the most popular feature on the online site, and this is our Benefit calculators. So again, depending on the type of member that you are, there will be different calculators that show up here for you. They all work in pretty much the same way.

The one that I'm going to show you now today is this one, the retirement calculator. So what we're basically using this for is - for as an active member, you're thinking, "What is the earliest possible age that I can afford to retire?" This is where you want to go in and play about and get your quotes. So whenever you go in, it will automatically default to your normal pension age, which could be like your state pension age. So for this person, it's the 31st of December 2035.

And what you can do is you can change the day, the month, the year and calculate your results, and it will do those calculations for you. So Leah, I think, had shown you as part of her presentation that if you retire early there's certain reductions that are in place. So, 5%, 10%, whatever, this will show you your figures and what those reductions will mean for you.

So, before I go ahead and do that, I'm just going to quickly point out here. You can see you have an option here to - for your pay. This pay is provided just by your employer. So, unless you basically - best to keep it as it is unless you know that there's something wrong, or you know you're getting a pay rise or something like that. Because if you add on £20,000 to your final salary pay and calculate your results, it's obviously going to massively inflate your pension.

So, don't change the pay unless you know that - that it it's valid.

The other thing I'll quickly point out because it might look confusing. You can see there's two pays here. There's one which is the Career Average pay. And there's one which is the final salary pay. For a lot of people, these will both be the same. And if you just have sort of one job; you work full-time, you don't do any overtime, you just get the same amount of salary every month. These two figures will probably be the same. The reason why this person's is different is because this person - we have it set up in the system. They work part-time -.

So, your final salary pay is based on your full-time equivalent, and your Career Average pay is the pay you actually receive. So, this person actually takes home just under £19,000 a year, which is why that's their CARE pay, whereas their final salary pay, that's scaled up to what they would earn if they work full-time. So, sometimes these can be different, and it might be totally fine if you work part-time, or do overtime, or something like that.

Okay, so I'm going to jump back in here. I'm going to say "I want to go 2 years early". So I'm going to change that from 2035 to 2033. You can change the day or month as well if you want. I'm just going to keep it simple here and change there. So before I click Calculate, you can see that at my normal retirement date, this is say "My annual pension will be about £11,500 grand a year. So, let's see what happens when I want to go two years early. So I'll click Calculate.

What this is doing right now is talking to our administration system in real time, getting you your real figures. So this is the same as if you contact our administration team and ask them to post you out a quote. You can go on and do the exact same thing, and you can do as many quotes as you want, and you can get it in real time.

Whereas if you phone us up and ask for a quote, it'll take several weeks to get it out for you. And you can only pick one or two dates; we can't do quotes for you for 10 different dates. Whereas on the online system, you can do as many as you want.

So, I've put my data in there, I've clicked Calculate, and you can see down here the results. So, that says "If I go two years early, my annual pension is going to drop to £9,691 a year. And you can see my lump sum is still there. This person, because they had membership before 2009, they have that automatic lump sum. So, say you

can put in as many dates as you want, click Calculate, and then you can play about with these figures. What we also show you down here, this is if you take the maximum annual pension option.

And, Leah talked in her presentation about - you can give up some of your annual pension for an additional tax-free lump sum. So we're showing you here the maximum tax-free lump sum that you can take. Which for this person - everybody's will be different. For this person, they can take a maximum lump sum of £42,500, and that would drop their £9,600 down to £6,300. Now you can obviously take any value in between the £2,800 and the £42,500. We're just showing you there the maximum and the minimum. So, where you can play about with what amount of lump sum you might want to take, is down here. So, we have this slider bar that you can pull across, and, as you can see, the figures are changing. If I pull that up, you can see there's the maximum, £42,500. But you can play about with it.

You can also type in. So say you know you've £10,000 to pay off your mortgage. So you can say "I want £10,000." You can type in the £10,000, and it'll show you there. Then the annual pension you'll get will be just over £9,000. If you need, say, £15,000, you can see there what that will reduce your pension to. So you can play about with that.

One thing to point out for this is this doesn't include the value of any AVC fund.

So, that's where if you're act - this is great if you're a couple years away from retirement and you're trying to figure out roughly when can I retire. Whenever you actually come to retire if especially if you have an AVC fund, then that's fine to contact our office for like a detailed quote. But this is really good if you're in the lead-up and you're - you're wanting accurate figures. They just don't include the AVC fund. Okay, so hopefully that makes sense. That's the calculator. You can also download your results if you want. As I say, there are other calculators in there if you're leaving your employer and you need to defer your benefits. But they all work roughly the same way.

## Retirement Planner Tile

So, I'll move on quickly then. The next thing we have here is a Retirement planner. So, this is something that our software developers developed. And it was in... the -

the figures that have been provided. They're provided by Pensions UK, and they're based on independent research by Loughborough University. So the reason why I'm just giving that wee caveat before we start, is the premise of this planner; is what it's going to do is it's going to get you thinking about how much money will you actually need when you come to retire for the lifestyle that you want. So they've given you three options here. So, the Essentials covered, Living comfortably and Luxurious retirement. And they've said what they think you're going to need per month to live that type of lifestyle.

I say I'm just caveating it because this is UK wide. It's not Northern Ireland specific. You're obviously going to need a lot more money if you live in the centre of London than if you live in Belfast or Armagh or wherever. So, just take the figures with a pinch of salt. It's - it's good to go in and do but, yeah, take the figures with a pinch of salt.

So, what you can do first of all is there's a little toggle up here if you're single or a couple. And as you can see, the figures change. So I'm going to select Couple. I'm going to go down here. I'm going to just pick the middle one, Living comfortably. So, what it says is, for a couple they think you're going to need £2,800 a month for this lifestyle. And how they've calculated that is based on these figures. So, they've assumed you've paid off your mortgage. They think you're going to want £500 for holidays and shopping and whatever else. You can go in and click these wee buttons, or you can type in and change these figures.

And if you do that, you can see this figure up here changes. So you can play about with it if you want to change it. Once you're happy, click Continue. And what it's going to do here, this is where we need to not panic. It says you need £2,800 a month for this lifestyle. As you can see, this person is on track to receive just over £1,000 a month. So, they're obviously quite short. But remember that I selected a Couple, so this is only this person's pension. So, this is where we can add in some more information. So say this person knows that their other half also has a pension. Say it's £700 a month or something like that. You can add that in there and, as you can see, it adds on.

The other thing as well that we want to remember, and I give you the figures on the previous page, was whenever your state pension kicks in if you're going to get the

full state pension. I think it's just - I think it's around £1,000 a month. So I'm going to add that in as well, and, all of a sudden, it's looking a lot more healthy. If you have a part-time job, any saved money, or additional income, you can also add things in there.

So, it's just to get you thinking because with those - Leah talked about the additional contributions that you can pay to boost your pension if you want to. What you don't want to do is get to within a year or two of retirement and realise that you don't have enough saved. So, the idea of this is that you go in much earlier, see what you're on course to receive, and you can then start planning if you want to boost your pension. If no actually, I think I'm going to be okay. Does your other half have a pension? And you can play about with that. You can save your retirement goal, which means that every time you go back into this section, this, it'll just bring you straight to this page because you'll have saved it. Or you can go back to the lifestyle expenses. Just a - a tool to play about with.

### **Latest Pension Value Tile**

So, the next thing that I'm going to show you then is the Latest pension value. We'll not spend long on this because it's, as it says, it's your latest pension value. A lot - depending on who your employer is, this might be updated on a monthly basis, or it might be nearly a year out of date. We're moving all of our employers onto a new administration system. Once they're all onboard, they give us your pay information.

Whereas previously, they just give us your information once a year, which is why your information, if you go on and you're - you're looking at your pay, and you can see that it's a year out of date, it's probably because your employer is still on the old system. So, this is just showing this person's current pension is worth £7,000, and it's saying how we got that £7,000. £2,800 is final salary, and £4,281 is Career Average. And again, we've got this drop-down again where you can go in, and it can show you the breakdown of your - of this £4,200; how we've got to that figure each year.

### **Details and Settings Tile**

Right, the last thing I'm going to show you then quickly here is Details and settings. So you can go in here; you've got your Personal details. If your phone number, email

address, or address has changed, please let us know. You can simply click in there, and you can just update your details and click Save changes. So you don't need to phone us or write to us anymore; you can just quickly do it on your online account.

The Employment details. You've got two sections here. Your Membership details. First bit here talks about your current job, so it just tells you who your employer is, when you started. If you ever need to know the date you joined the Scheme or date you joined your employer, it's in there. Remember I said earlier that this person was part-time. Just shows this - their hours in here. So they work 60% of the full-time hours. There's a section for Service breaks, so if you ever had any service breaks, you can see this person was on strike for a day in 2011, or if you have any lost pension, if you were off on maternity leave, or anything like that that wasn't covered, or career break, you'll see that information in there. And then another thing that people were asking in the Chat, was transfers in. If you've transferred any pension into the Scheme, you should be able to see that here in the Past service details, and it'll show you that you've transferred information or that you've transferred pensions into the Scheme. So that's where you'll find that.

And then the Financial details. Again, you can check - choose which job if you've got more than one and you can choose the tax year. It'll just tell you your contribution rate. It'll tell you your pensionable pay. Really important that you go on and check this. We'll say this is part of your annual benefit statement. The way your pension is built up, as Leah said, we take the pay that your employer gives us, we divide it by 49, and that is what is banked into your pension account. If your employer has given us the wrong pay, we will bank the wrong amount of pension. So, it's really important that you log on and you check that this pay that we have received is correct. If you have any queries about your pay, you need to go to your employer. That's not NILGOSC. We just take whatever your employer gives us. But do remember that if you're with one of the bigger employers, like the Education Authority or some of the councils, Translink, anybody like that, they're probably still on the old system, so this pay might be a year out of date, and that's okay. But just go in and make sure you're happy with your pay. And that's pretty much it for me. There's one tiny little other thing.

We've got your Communication preferences. So, this is where if you want to - we're trying to move a lot of people to electronic communication preference, but if you would prefer to receive your information by post, you can go in and change it. There's also an Accessibility preference in there as well. If you need information in a different language, in a diff - in large print, or any of that, you can go in and select that in there. And that's pretty much me. I'll pass you back over to Leah. **Leah:** Great, thank you, Sinead.

## **State Pension Overview [01:34:52]**

Firstly, just want to go through a little bit about the state pension. The state pension is paid completely separately to your NILGOSC benefits, so we don't administer that at all. But just remember that it is going to be there for - for you. That is currently set at about £230.25 per week or about £11,973 per year. That's the full rate of the new state pension. Whether or not you are entitled to the full rate of the new state pension, depends on whether or not you have 35 years of national insurance contributions to get that full rate.

## **National Insurance Contributions**

So, if you think you might have gaps in your national insurance contributions that leads to you not having the full 35 years of contributions built up that could be because, for example, you've taken a career break in the past. Anytime where you just weren't pay - you weren't being paid and therefore weren't paying national insurance contributions. You can check that on gov.uk's website. And indeed, if you do have gaps and you want to fill those in to get the full state pension entitlement, you can look on gov.uk towards paying additional voluntary national insurance contributions to fill in those gaps.

## **Claiming/Deferring**

Remember that the payment of your state pension is not automatic. You do need to return a claim form that's available on gov.uk I believe as well. So, whenever you come up towards state pension age and you want to claim that, remember that you do need to actually physically go and claim that yourself.

You can defer payment of your state pension similar to the way that you can defer payment of your NILGOSC pension and take late retirement. If you do that, you can

defer it, and it gets increased by 1% for every nine weeks that you defer your state pension for.

## Tax Implications

Looking very quickly at some of the tax implications. We talked about some of these as we were going through things like lump sums, and changing pension to lump sum, and things like that. There are some other tax implications just to be aware of in relation to your pension benefits. So, there are some limits on the pension savings that you can make before you then attract a tax charge. There is what we call the annual allowance tax charge. That is a tax on the amount of pension growth that you can have in any particular year without attracting extra tax charges. It's currently set at £60,000 for most members. Most of us luckily will not have to worry about - about banking any more than £60,000 of pension growth each year.

But if you're a particularly higher earner, then you may - you may breach that annual allowance. But we will write out to you and let you know if you are in the realm of breaching that annual allowance, or indeed you are going to be breaching it. You will be - you will probably be aware already that you are one of those members. There's a lump sum allowance. We had mentioned before whenever it comes to taking your tax, your tax-free lump sums, there is the cumulative limit of £268,275 on the tax-free part of any lump sums that are paid at retirement. Now, any tax-free lump sum falls within that, so if you're going to take your AVC at retirement as a tax-free lump sum, all in one, that will come under that £268,275 threshold.

Again, if you also have an automatic lump sum paid to you as well, an automatic tax-free lump sum attached to your pre 1st of April 2009 membership that's also going to come under that limit. So you do need to make sure that if you're looking at different options for lump sums at retirement, altogether they do need to come under that £268,000 figure. There's also the lump sum and death benefits allowance figure or tax limit, which is a cumulative limit of £1,073,100 on the total amount of tax-free part of your lump sums and your lump sum death benefits, all added together.

So, again, it's not something that you need to really worry about but it's just something to be aware of that there are tax limits always there when it comes to payment of your pension benefits.

## **Ways to Maximise your Pension Awareness [01:38:28]**

A few things just to point out for helping you to maximise your pension awareness. A few things you can do to make sure that you are as aware of your pension as possible, especially coming up to retirement.

### **Trace Lost Pensions**

Firstly, you can trace lost pensions. There's an online portal on gov.uk where you can find previous pension schemes that you would have paid into if you know for a fact that you paid into a lot of different pension schemes, or indeed one that you paid into years and years and years ago and you can't remember what happened to it. It is quite a good portal to use to try to trace those.

### **State Pension Quote Request**

You can request a state pension quote from gov.uk as well. In the similar way that you can get a pension quote for yourself from NILGOSC on the online platform that Sinead showed you.

### **Tools to Monitor Spending**

You can keep tracking of spending now and in retirement. There is a government - an arms-length government body called MoneyHelper.org.uk. They have lots and lots of resources available there - not just for NILGOSC members - for all members and also for just general financial advice and help. They have a budget planner there. They also have a Money Midlife MOT, which is very useful as well just for assessing your current finances and your finances going forward toward retirement.

### **My NILGOSC Pension Online**

There's My NILGOSC Pension Online, which Sinead just showed us a demo of. Hopefully you've seen how beneficial that can be to use. You can nominate your beneficiaries through the death grant on there. You can calculate projections for your retirement using our online calculators and you can also, as Sinead showed you, go on and upload forms for us. So if you, specifically, if you joined NILGOSC in the last year, you would still be within the time frame where you can look at potentially transferring in benefits built up in a previous pension scheme. If you - if that's the case and you are applying for that to happen, you do need to get those forms into us

as soon as possible. And one of the quickest ways to get a form into us is via My NILGOSC Pension Online because it goes directly onto your file straight away.

### **Private Pension Queries**

If you have any private or pens - private or personal pension queries, or AVC queries, MoneyHelper.org.uk again is very useful. They have a service called Pension Wise, which you can have - actually a personal one-on-one meeting with one of their Pension Wise administrators and you can ask them any personal private pension queries or AVC fund queries that you have, and they can give you advice on that.

### **Pensions Dashboards**

Coming soon as well there is going to be an initiative called Pensions Dashboards. That is not a NILGOSC initiative. It's actually a government initiative. It will be an online interface where you'll be able to access; you'll sign in securely and access all of your pension information in one place. So, that'll mean that your NILGOSC pension information will be there alongside any, you know, private pension that you have, any previous workplace pensions you have; should all be within the one portal. So it'll be quite handy. There is more news on that to come soon.

### **Pension Scams**

One of the last things I want to go through, just pension scams, always worth mentioning. Just be sure that you know the warning signs of pension scams. Unfortunately, they're getting very very common. A lot more common than they used to be. Make sure you're aware that any contact out of the blue about your pension is illegal. Do report that contact out of the blue to your - or to the Information Commissioner's Office, or the ICO. So, make sure that, you know, it's not just an annoyance that somebody's contacting you, and you know it's a scam, it's also illegal, so make sure you do get it reported.

Some of the really key warning signs that should be setting alarm bells off in your head about a pension scam is if somebody is saying, "We can guarantee you really, really high returns. We can guarantee you access to your pension benefits before the age of 55. It's a time limited offer, so you have to sign up today, or by the end of the week or else you're going to miss out." And there's also an upfront cash

incentive, so, you have to sign up by the end of the week, and also, we'll give you £500 if you sign up today.

So just be aware of those kinds of usual scam methods that they use. If you do think that you've been a victim of a scam or you think somebody has tried to make you a victim of a scam, please do report those scams to Action Fraud **[renamed to Report Fraud]**; and that's their mo - their telephone number there. Please also do tell your employer and let NILGOSC know as well because it means that we can be vigilant and be on our guard for other members as well because if they're trying to target you, the odds are they're trying to target other members too.

If it sounds too good to be true, what we say is, it probably is when it comes to pension scams.

### **Things to Remember [01:42:39]**

Okay, last wee thing, just a couple of things to remember. Please do register for My NILGOSC Pension Online, the online portal. Sinead showed you there how beneficial it is, all the different functions on it. So please do avail of it and it is available there for free for all members of the pension scheme.

Please do tell us about any changes to your personal circumstances, your personal information, so your email, your postal address or your phone number, so we can still contact you when needed. Changes to your marital status or your surname as well. So again, Sinead would have showed you where you go to check on the likes of your death benefits and your spousal - spousal pension. Please do make sure that we know if you're married or have a cohabiting partner or a civil partner.

Please note that you only have 12 months from joining NILGOSC to request and accept a transfer in of benefits. So somebody had asked in the chat there, they'd said they joined NILGOSC a couple of years ago, but they never actually looked at transferring in previous pension benefits from another Scheme. Unfortunately, it'd be too late for that person now. It's only within your 12 months from joining NILGOSC. The way you do that is via an LGS8 form. You need to fill that in. You get that on our website where I showed you where to get the forms. Send that into us, and we will start the investigations for you for getting those benefits transferred in.

Please do make sure you nominate your death grant beneficiaries on My NILGOSC Pension Online, or if you're struggling to do it on there, you can fill in an LGS20, Expression of Wish form, also available in that Member resources area of our website.

Please make sure as well that you check your annual benefit statement as I mentioned in our previous slide, to just check it for any common errors to do with your pay, your personal information, and so on.

### **Ways to Contact NILGOSC [01:44:09]**

Okay, lastly, just a couple of contact details there. Use our website. It's a wealth of information for members and employers alike. If you can't find your information on the website, then please do lift the phone or email us, and we can hopefully deal with your query that way. You can email us on [info@nilgosc.org.uk](mailto:info@nilgosc.org.uk). That's our main reception desk, and they'll put your query through to the most appropriate department. Same thing with the telephone number. That goes through to reception, and our lovely receptionist will put you through to whoever will be able - who will be best placed to help you.

You can visit us in-person at our Templeton House address on Holywood Road, BT4 2LP. You don't need to have an appointment anymore to come in and visit us, so you can drop in, and we should have an admin adviser to come down and speak to you about whatever query you have.

Just note, we cannot provide financial advice. That's the key thing.

And if you do want to discuss something like an annual benefit statement or an error on, you know, the online platform, try to bring something in with you that we can look at with you. Especially if, as I say, it's your annual benefit statement. Bring in a copy with you so you can say "This looks incorrect on it!", and our admin adviser can - can deal with that query as it arises.

### **Closing Remarks [01:45:18]**

So, that is us at the very very end. Apologies for us running a wee bit over time there but thank you so much for coming. Really really appreciate the attendance.

We do have a seminar/training feedback form for members. I have the QR code on the screen there for ease of access. I will also be sending the link to that form whenever I send out the seminar slides to everybody who attended today after this. But if you do want to quickly fill it out, I'd really appreciate it. You can scan that QR code with your phone camera even - on the screen currently.

So please, do let us know your feedback, and we'll take it on board as much as possible.

**Leah:** Thank you everybody. Thank you everyone. **Sinead:** Thanks everybody for coming. Thanks. Bye.