

**CONSULTATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND  
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**



**2025 - 2028**

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## Foreword

As an organisation, South Yorkshire Pensions Authority's mission is:

***“To deliver a sustainable and cost-effective pension scheme for members and employers in South Yorkshire delivering high levels of customer service and strong investment returns which facilitate stable contributions.”***

Our role is to run the local government pension scheme for our members, putting them at the heart of everything we do, ensuring we provide them with the best level of customer service in the most cost-effective way.

To achieve our mission, we need to focus on key objectives, which are:



The achievement of our mission and objectives will require the fulfilment of the respective responsibilities of the elected Members of the Pensions Authority and its officers. In relation to consultation communication and engagement, we both have responsibilities which contribute to the delivery of an improved service in this area.

We intend to consult and communicate with all our stakeholders as set out in the document and use those results to review our service delivery on a regular basis.

The aim of this document is to explain our Consultation, Communications and Engagement Strategy, the various ways in which we consult and communicate, why we do this and what happens with the results.

Councillor Jayne Dunn  
Chair  
South Yorkshire Pensions Authority

George Graham  
Director  
South Yorkshire Pensions Authority

DRAFT

## Consultation and Engagement Strategy

South Yorkshire Pensions Authority (SYPA) is committed to managing resources efficiently while maintaining a high-quality service for our stakeholders. To ensure our priorities align with the needs and expectations of our members, we will continue to actively consult and engage with them. By seeking regular feedback and fostering open communication, we aim to enhance service delivery and ensure our strategic objectives remain relevant and effective.

### Ensuring Clear, Inclusive, and Transparent Engagement

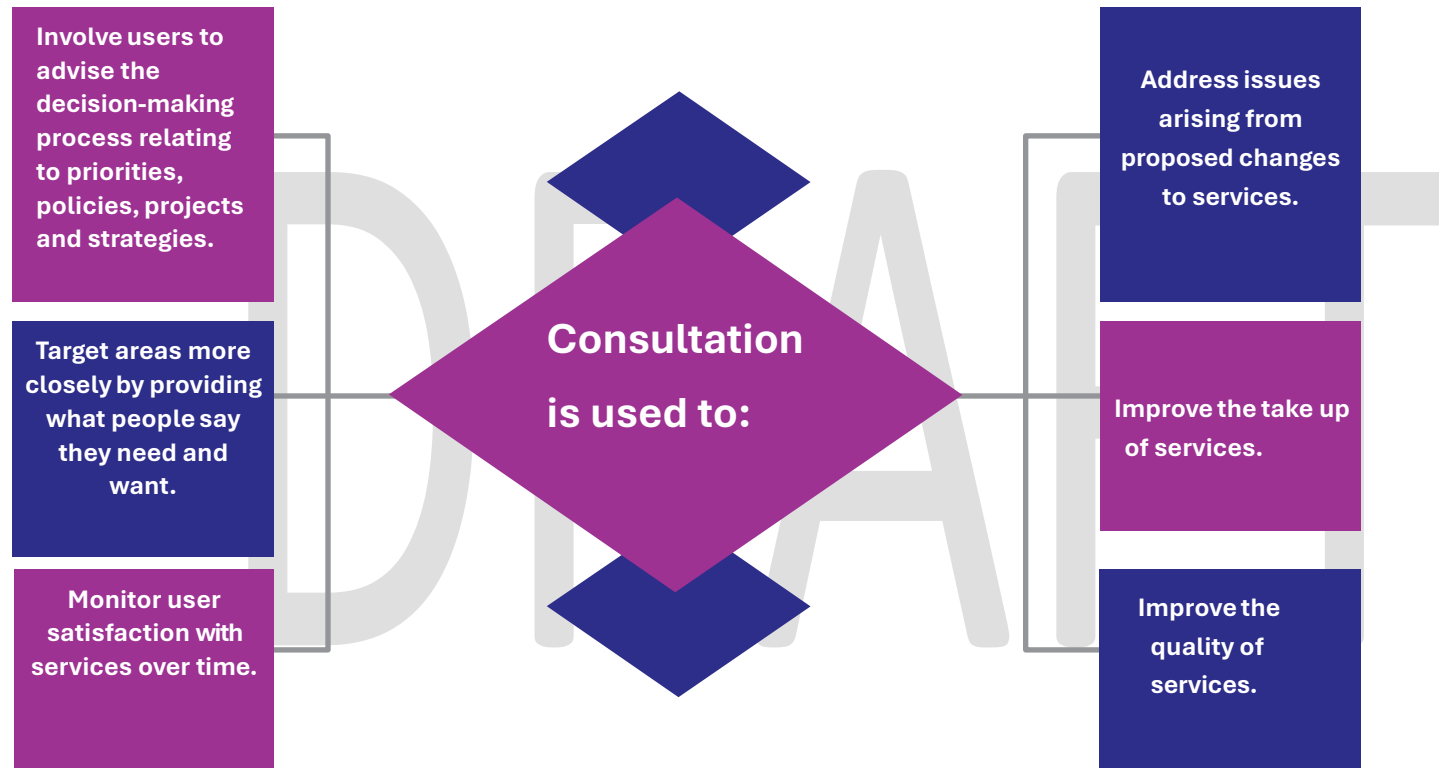
Pension matters can be technical, legalistic, and complex, often operating differently from other organisations and sectors. To foster meaningful engagement, our consultation exercises must be well-planned and effectively delivered. This ensures that stakeholders understand both their opportunity to contribute to our decision-making processes and the practical limitations of their input. To achieve this, SYPA's consultation approach will be designed with the following key principles and methods of delivery:

Principle	Description
Clarity	Clearly define the purpose, objectives, and target audience of each consultation exercise, along with the potential impact of the feedback received.
Simplicity	Present issues and terms clearly and concisely to ensure accessible, engaging participation while managing risks and learning from experience and best practices.
Transparency	Provide access to all relevant consultation materials, including documents, reports, decision records, and supporting information, in line with Freedom of Information commitments.
Empowerment	Provide the freedom for individuals to identify and implement solutions to problems.
Facilitation	Ensure stakeholders have the necessary context and details to make informed contributions to discussions and decision-making.
Inclusion	Ensure diverse perspectives are considered by actively gathering insights and involving stakeholders in decision-making.
Consultation	Actively obtain stakeholder feedback on analysis, options, and decisions to inform SYPA's approach.
Involvement	Work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure their concerns and objectives are acknowledged and considered.
Collaboration	Engage stakeholders in co-developing alternatives and identifying preferred solutions, fostering shared decision-making.



## Why Consult?

To ensure that the Authority provides the services that people want in the way they want them.



## Who does SYPA consult with?

We have an established range of mechanisms to support consultation activities.

The people that we are committed to consult with fall into a number of 'stakeholder' categories:

### **Scheme Member Consultation Groups**

These groups are made up of volunteers from each of our main membership categories. Representing current, deferred and pensioner members, each group is consulted on a range of issues as the need arises and provides written feedback on those issues. There is a limit of 200 members on each group. The role of these groups is to provide information to:

- Inform the decision-making process surrounding service delivery.
- Improve local systems and processes.
- Improve customer satisfaction.

The results of each group are analysed and reported to officers. Any immediate actions resulting from this process are fed back for implementation. All other information is used to shape the future service delivery and forms part of the Authority's corporate planning and prioritisation process.

The results of consultation and what will happen will be reported in member newsletters. Changes that have been implemented as a result of consultation will have the effect monitored and will be consulted upon in the future to ensure continued satisfaction. The results of this will also be reported to elected Members.

### **Local Pension Board**

The Local Pension Board became a Statutory requirement from April 2015 and is made up of equal numbers of employer and scheme member representatives. The Board's responsibility is to ensure that the Fund is managed and administered effectively and efficiently and complies with the Pensions Regulator's General Code of Practice. The Board meets at least quarterly, has its own terms of reference and, in addition to reviewing all Authority business, is able to commission reports and request updates as and when necessary.

## Types of Consultation

### 1. Regular Consultation

#### Employee Engagement Survey

This is issued to all South Yorkshire Pensions Authority employees every two years. Its purpose is to monitor staff engagement and satisfaction across different measures relating to their role, leadership and management, professional development and the working environment. This provides information to support continuous improvement to ensure a motivated and engaged workforce to deliver our mission and objectives.

#### Scheme Member Satisfaction Survey

Targeted surveys are conducted annually, sampling members from various stakeholder groups. A minimum of two surveys will be carried out each year.

The results will be used to:

- ◆ Inform the decision-making process surrounding service delivery.
- ◆ Improve local systems and processes.
- ◆ Improve customer satisfaction and involve our customers in the provision of the services they receive.
- ◆ Ensure that our service has our members' approval.

#### Scheme Employer Satisfaction Survey

Focused surveys are carried out every two years with all our employers.

The results will be used to:

- ◆ Inform the decision-making process surrounding service delivery.
- ◆ Improve local systems and processes.
- ◆ Improve employer satisfaction.



## 2. Ad-Hoc Consultation

In addition to the regular surveys above, there are occasions when it is appropriate to consult our stakeholders on an ad-hoc basis. SYPA will take every opportunity to seek the opinions of its stakeholders through surveys to continually assess and improve the service provided.

### Responsible Investment Member Survey 2025

The Responsible Investment (RI) Survey is designed to gather members' views on responsible investment as part of SYPA's Investment Strategy review. Conducted independently by TLF to ensure confidentiality and adherence to data protection standards, the survey provides members with an opportunity to potentially influence how financial returns are balanced with responsible and sustainable investment practices. Members received a direct invitation via email, with a three-week window to participate, ensuring broad engagement. Insights from this consultation help shape investment priorities, reinforcing SYPA's commitment to transparency and stakeholder involvement in decision-making.

### Digital Communications Member Survey 2024

In December 2024 we consulted with members through an online survey about our Digital Communications and had 1,808 responses from members. To ensure a more accurate representation of our scheme membership, we have weighted the survey responses. This adjustment accounts for the disproportionately higher number of responses from retired members compared to active and deferred members.

#### Weighted Average Response Rates:

Membership type	Numbers that completed the survey		Total membership numbers (at November 2024)		Weighted average response rate
Active	516	28.5%	51,284	28.4%	28.4%
Deferred	210	11.6%	64,434	35.7%	35.7%
Pensioner	1,082	59.9%	64,933	35.9%	35.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,808</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>180,651</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

The infographic below highlights some of the key areas we will look to improve. Over the next few pages, there is a summary of the key findings from members' feedback in the digital communications survey and a suggested action plan to take forward to 2028 to further improve our members' digital experience with SYPA.

## Digital Communications Survey December 2024 - Results



**1,808**

members completed  
our Digital  
Communications  
survey.

### Social Media Engagement

1,468 responded to this question

**66.7%**

don't follow SYPA on  
social media

**5.7%**

do follow SYPA on  
social media

**27.6%**

were unaware SYPA had  
social media



**3.4**

was the average  
weighted overall  
level of member  
satisfaction with our  
digital channels.

**65%**

of members said they access  
information through the website  
but the usability rating averaged

**3.1**



**3.2**

was the average weighted level  
of member understanding of the  
scheme.



Across all member  
groups **email**  
was the preferred  
communication  
method.



**23%**

prefer pension  
news and updates

**8%**

want educational  
content

**5%**

like interactive  
posts (polls,  
Q&A)

Recommendation	Actions	Status
<b>1. Improve Access to Pension Information</b>		
Website Improvements	Member survey at the end of website visits for feedback	Planned - in progress with IT
	Redesign for better navigation, faster loading times based on feedback	Planned
	Simplify login and account recovery	Planned
Alternative Access Options	Promote support section with FAQs, video guides, and live chat	Ongoing
	Offer and promote printed pension summaries for non-digital members (on website, newsletter, social media)	Ongoing
	Consider a mobile app for pension access	Not a priority currently
Clearer Communication of Pension Benefits	Use jargon-free explanations in all documents	Ongoing
	Provide step-by-step instructions for accessing Annual Benefit Statements (ABS) and P60s	Planned
	Add pop-up messages on MyPension for ABS viewing	Completed - already in place

Recommendation	Actions	Status
<b>2. Enhance Communication Methods</b>		
Email as Primary Communication	Update processes to ensure email is the primary response method	Planned
	Maintain email as default and keep details updated	Ongoing
	Improve clarity and conciseness of emails	Ongoing
Postal Communication	Offer opt-in paper statements for key pension documents	Ongoing
	Ensure major updates are available in print and promote them	Ongoing
Increase Frequency & Clarity of Updates	Clearer tax implications for pensioners via website, letters, and newsletters	Ongoing - actioned on website
	Promote key web pages through news stories and social posts	Ongoing
Improved Newsletter Content	Active/Deferred Members: Pension forecasts, investment updates, retirement tips	Ongoing
	Pensioners: Financial management, tax information, case studies	Ongoing
	Include Q&A sections addressing common concerns	Ongoing

Recommendation	Actions	Status
<b>3. Expand Pension Education Efforts</b>		
Flexible Learning Formats	Continue live webinars & recorded sessions	Ongoing
	Offer printed guides and face-to-face sessions for pensioners	Ongoing
	Promote 'Understanding Your Pension' session in new member welcome email/letter	Completed - already in place
Targeted Education Topics	Cover pension benefits, retirement planning, and financial wellbeing topics for all member groups	Planned
Increase Awareness of Education Sessions	Tailored email invitations for upcoming events	Ongoing - already in place
	Dedicated website section for past session recordings	Ongoing - already in place
	Promote phone and in-person appointments for pension queries	Ongoing
<b>4. Strengthen Digital &amp; Social Media Engagement</b>		
Improve Website & Online Tools	Trial a young members' newsletter with tailored content	Planned
	Ensure pension calculator and forecast tools work smoothly	Ongoing

Recommendation	Actions	Status
	Add Q&As for common queries	Planned
	Provide a pension access checklist for members nearing retirement age	Planned
Optimise Social Media Strategy	Facebook-focused engagement for pensioners & deferred members	Ongoing
	Share bite-sized pension advice videos & Q&As	Planned
Enhance Digital Assistance	Updated step-by-step website tutorials for less tech-savvy members	Planned
<b>5. Improve Member Support &amp; Responsiveness</b>		
Proactive Member Outreach	Follow-up emails for members who haven't accessed statements	Completed for ABS emails, bulk email reminder planned for 2025
	Reminder system for key pension milestones (e.g., retirement eligibility)	Ongoing but already actioned for deferred members
Simplified Member Feedback	Regular surveys for digital access/communication issues	Planned
	Quarterly Feedback survey for customer service calls	Completed and in place



Recommendation	Actions	Status
	Quarterly Feedback survey for new retirees	Completed and in place
	Quarterly New starter feedback form	Completed and in place
	Email response satisfaction rating with follow-up option	Completed and in place
	Online feedback options on the website	Ongoing
	Digital communication member survey every 2.5 years	Planned

## Communications Strategy

SYPA recognises that in fulfilling its objectives, and in order to be fully effective, it has a duty to communicate with all its stakeholders about its actions, views, policies, and service standards.

Our Communications Strategy sets out how we intend to do this.

### Aims

The communication element of SYPA's Consultation, Communications, and Engagement Strategy aims to enhance awareness and understanding of SYPA's role, achievements, and impact among stakeholders. By proactively sharing clear, accessible, and relevant information, we seek to maintain a positive reputation and foster trust.

This approach complements the consultation aspect of the overall strategy, ensuring a meaningful two-way dialogue where stakeholders are informed, engaged, and empowered to provide valuable feedback.

### Overriding Principles

This Consultation, Communications, and Engagement Strategy aims to refine and expand SYPA's communication methods while continuously measuring their impact.

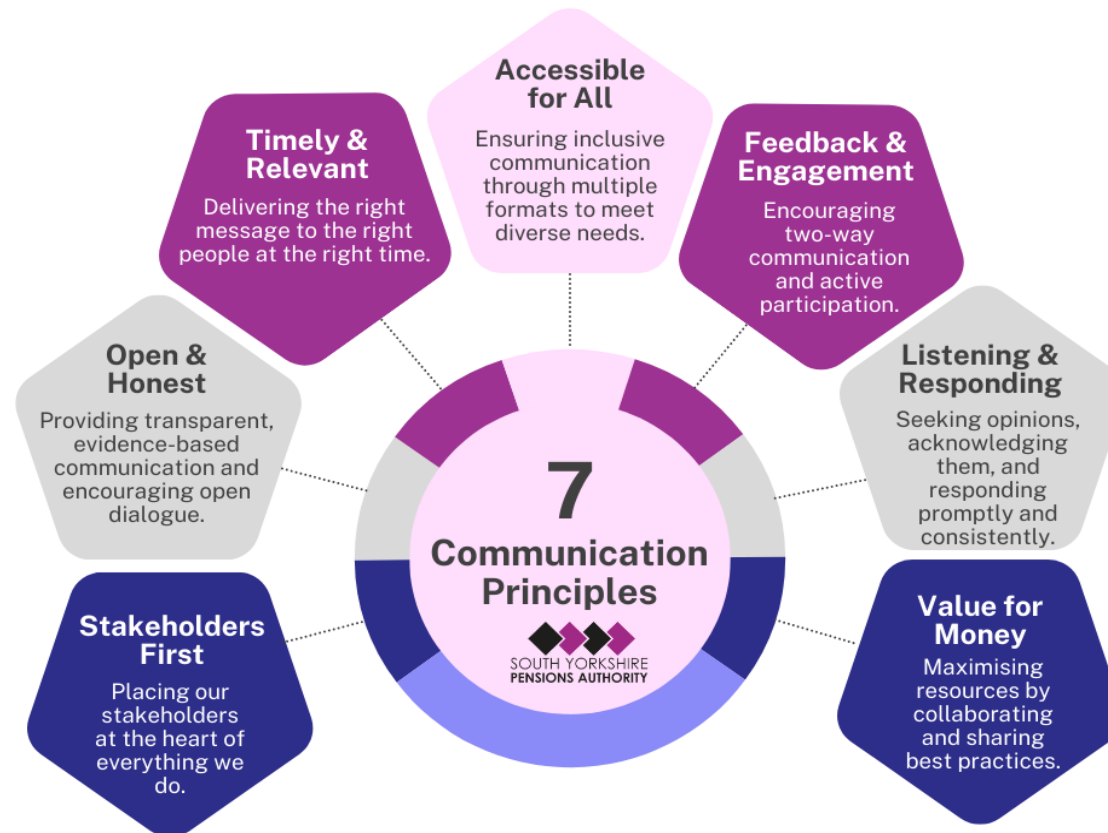
To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure that members, employers, and partner organisations have a clear, consistent, and positive understanding of SYPA's values, services, and achievements.
- Tailor messages to specific audience groups, using the most effective content and channels to foster engagement.
- Align communications with consultation efforts, ensuring they inform and support one another.
- Integrate measurement and evaluation into all communication activities to assess effectiveness and drive improvements.

### Effective communication will:

- Be clear, jargon-free, and aligned with SYPA's key messages.
- Support both member engagement and corporate priorities.

- Maintain a high standard of quality and consistency.
- Strengthen SYPA's brand identity across all communication formats, including publications, emails, letters, presentations, and digital content.
- Establish principles for all communication channels, including press, web, and consultation materials.
- Identify the most effective ways to engage members, employers, and stakeholders.
- Ensure a coordinated approach to communications across the organisation in line with strategic objectives.
- Outline an action plan with clear methods for monitoring performance and impact.



## Targeted Audiences and Methods of Communication

The key audiences we aim to communicate with are set out below. The types of messages that we communicate will vary, ensuring all communications are appropriate and will meet the needs of that particular audience.



Within these audiences we also have to think about the different ways we target the different groups within them, as not all communications will suit all members.

Please see the table below which gives some examples of how we will differentiate our communications approach and key messages for different audience groups.

Audience Group	Key Messages
<b>Contributing (Active) Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Secure and Guaranteed Benefits</b> – The LGPS provides a guaranteed package of benefits, protected by law, with no investment risk to members.</li> <li>• <b>Understanding the LGPS</b> – Clear and accessible information helps members navigate how the scheme works and what it offers.</li> <li>• <b>Planning for Retirement</b> – Encouraging members to assess whether they are saving enough and to explore available retirement options.</li> <li>• <b>Legislative Changes</b> – Keeping members informed about how changes in legislation may impact their pension benefits.</li> <li>• <b>Employer Contributions</b> – Highlighting that employers contribute to the scheme, making it a valuable and cost-effective benefit.</li> <li>• <b>Additional Scheme Benefits</b> – Raising awareness of extra benefits, such as ill-health provisions and death-in-service support.</li> <li>• <b>Keeping Information Up to Date</b> – Emphasising the importance of maintaining accurate personal details to ensure the correct benefits are received.</li> <li>• <b>Retirement Options</b> – Providing members with clear guidance on the choices available when planning for retirement.</li> <li>• <b>Support for Dependants</b> – Ensuring members understand the benefits available to their partners and dependants in the event of their death.</li> </ul>
<b>Deferred Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Guaranteed Benefits with No Investment Risk</b> – The LGPS provides a secure pension, backed by law, with no financial risk to members.</li> <li>• <b>Planning for Retirement</b> – Encouraging members to assess their savings and consider whether they are on track for a comfortable retirement.</li> <li>• <b>Keeping Information Up to Date</b> – Emphasising the importance of maintaining accurate personal details to ensure members receive their full benefits.</li> <li>• <b>Understanding Your Pension</b> – Providing clear, accessible information to help members make informed decisions about their pension.</li> <li>• <b>Legislative Changes</b> – Keeping members informed about how changes in legislation may affect their pension benefits.</li> <li>• <b>Implications of Transferring Out</b> – Helping members understand the risks and considerations when transferring their pension out of the LGPS.</li> </ul>

Audience Group	Key Messages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Effective Communication of Changes</b> – Ensuring members receive timely and clear updates about any changes affecting their pension.</li> <li>• <b>Retiring Online</b> – Highlighting the benefits of using online services for a smoother, more efficient retirement process.</li> </ul>
<b>Pensioner Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Keeping Information Up to Date</b> – Ensuring personal details are accurate so members receive the correct benefits without delay.</li> <li>• <b>Support When You Need It</b> – SYPA is available to help with any questions or concerns about pensions and retirement.</li> <li>• <b>Guaranteed Pension for Life</b> – The LGPS provides a secure, lifelong pension, backed by law, with no investment risk.</li> <li>• <b>Financial Protection for Loved Ones</b> – Benefits are payable to dependants in the event of a member's death, offering security for families.</li> <li>• <b>Staying Informed on Legislative Changes</b> – Helping members understand how changes in pension legislation may affect them.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential Members (including those who have opted out)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Employer Contributions</b> – Employers contribute significantly more than members, making the LGPS a valuable benefit.</li> <li>• <b>Life Cover from Day One</b> – Three years' salary paid to your beneficiaries, with no medical requirements.</li> <li>• <b>Tax Benefits</b> – Tax relief applies to all contributions, including additional voluntary payments.</li> <li>• <b>Flexible Retirement Options</b> – A lifelong pension with the option to convert part of it into a tax-free lump sum.</li> <li>• <b>No Hidden Costs</b> – Members pay a set percentage of their salary, with no extra fees or charges.</li> <li>• <b>Building a Pension</b> – Just two years of membership secures a pension, even if you leave before retirement.</li> <li>• <b>Guaranteed Benefits, No Investment Risk</b> – Pensions are backed by law, ensuring financial security.</li> <li>• <b>Ill-Health and Dependant Protection</b> – Early retirement due to ill health is covered, along with pensions for dependants.</li> <li>• <b>Flexible Contributions</b> – Struggling financially? A lower contribution option allows you to keep building pension benefits.</li> <li>• <b>Inflation Protection</b> – Pensions increase with inflation to help maintain financial stability in retirement.</li> </ul>
<b>Dependant Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Keep Your Details Updated</b> – Ensure your personal information is accurate to receive the correct benefits.</li> <li>• <b>Support When You Need It</b> – SYPA is here to answer any questions about your pension.</li> <li>• <b>Guaranteed Pension for Life</b> – A secure, lifelong pension backed by law, with no investment risk.</li> </ul>



Audience Group	Key Messages
<b>Employers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Informing Employees</b> – Employers have a duty to provide staff with accurate information about the LGPS.</li><li>• <b>Understanding the Scheme</b> – Employers must stay informed about how the LGPS works and any changes that may impact members.</li><li>• <b>Supporting Member Education</b> – The LGPS is a valuable benefit, and employers play a key role in helping employees understand its value and any updates.</li><li>• <b>Reporting Member Changes</b> – Employers must notify the Fund of any changes in employees' circumstances that affect their pension.</li><li>• <b>Data and Compliance Responsibilities</b> – Employers are responsible for providing accurate employee data and complying with LGPS requirements as set out in the Fund's Administration Strategy.</li></ul>

The next few sections will go into more detail around the methods we use to communicate with our different audiences and the frequency of some of these communications.

## Communicating with Contributing (Active) Members

### Pension Forecasts

Annual pension forecasts are made available on our secure online portal 'mypension'. Notifications to inform members their forecasts are available to view are issued by email and text. If we don't hold either of these, then the notification will be made by post.

### Pension Planning Newsletter

We produce a digital newsletter to keep members informed about pension scheme updates and relevant topics. Rather than a fixed schedule, publication is driven by timely content.

Created in Brevo (our online mailing platform), the newsletter is emailed to members, with a PDF version available on the member section of our website. While paper copies can be requested, our digital-first approach reflects members' increasing preference for online communications.

Our newsletters support members with the latest updates as well as increasing their pension knowledge, understanding how the scheme works, and making the most of their benefits. We provide practical tips on boosting pension savings and making informed choices to help members get the most from their pension.

In addition to pension updates, we include lifestyle content to make the newsletter visually engaging and enjoyable to read. This ensures members receive relevant, accessible, and engaging updates in a format that suits them, while allowing us to track open and click through rates to aid with future content planning.

### Member Education Presentations

We provide group information sessions at members' workplaces, delivered on demand in partnership with employers. Additionally, we offer specialist sessions for members impacted by specific changes, such as public service transfers to private organisations.

We also participate in employer-organised induction, mid-life, and pre-retirement courses, subject to sufficient interest. Members can attend in-person sessions at our Oakwell House office or join online-only sessions for greater flexibility, we host a full calendar of events from February to November including hands-on in person sessions for members to learn how to use our online system, mypension. We have also started to offer additional member sessions, in collaboration with the Money and Pensions Service, that focus more on financial wellbeing and getting the most

out of your money. These have proved popular with our members and help to boost their financial awareness in other areas of their lives as well as around their pensions.

For those unable to attend our sessions, recordings are available on our website, ensuring members can access key information whenever they need it.

## Communicating with Deferred Members

### Deferred Benefit Statements

Annual deferred benefit statements are made available on our secure online portal 'mypension'. Notifications to inform members their statements are available to view are issued by email and text. If we don't hold either of these then notification will be made by post.

### Your Past is Your Future Newsletter

Annually we produce a Your Past is Your Future digital newsletter. The main purpose is to keep in contact with our deferred benefit members. A deferred beneficiary is usually no longer in employment within the pension fund and as they are not in receipt of their pension and without regular contact it is easy to lose touch. The content of the newsletter will inform members of changes to the pension scheme and include lifestyle articles of interest. There is no fixed time for issue, but it is usually linked with the annual report summary and deferred benefit statements.

Newsletters will be digital by default with a PDF also provided on the member section of the website. We live in a digital age, and while paper versions will be made available on request, our digital by default position recognises that the vast majority of our members now have access to the internet.

## Communicating with Pensioner Members

### Retirement Insight Newsletter

Bi-annually we produce a digital newsletter, the main purpose is to inform retired members about issues that affect them such as annual cost of living increases. This newsletter is generally produced at fixed times in the spring and autumn to coincide with pensions increase and annual report content. Newsletters are digital by default. Paper versions are issued on request. All new pensioners will be digital by default, with the

exception of members who aren't online and request a hard copy. The spring issue of the newsletter will be issued with the members' April pay advice and P60 update.

## **Payslips**

Payslips are available on our secure online portal 'mypension'. Members who retired before July 2019 will receive a paper copy of their payslip if their net pay varies by more than £5.

## **P60s**

Pensioners with email addresses on the system will receive an email to inform them when their P60s are available, and this will include details on how to access these through their online mypension accounts. Pensioners who have requested paper copies will have these issued by post.

The table on the next page sets out the methods we use to communicate with our different audiences, the frequency of these and whether they are digital or not.

Communication Type	Digital	Non Digital	Website	Frequency	Intended Audience
Annual Pension Forecasts	✓	Notification by post if no email address or mobile number held	✓	Annual	Contributing (Active) Members
Deferred Benefit Statements	✓	Notification by post if no email address or mobile number held	✓	Annual	Deferred Members
Pensioner Member Newsletters	✓	Paper copies on request	✓	Biannual (Spring & Autumn)	Pensioners
Active & Deferred Member Newsletters	✓	✗	✓	Annual	Active and Deferred Members
Employer Newsletter	✓	✗	✓	Monthly	Employers
Ad hoc Newsletters	✓	✓	✓	As required	As required
Pension Presentations	✓	✓	✓	As required	All Members
Payslips	✓	Paper copies on request	✓	Monthly	Pensioners
P60s	✓	Paper copies on request	✓	Annual	Pensioners

## Communicating with Employers

### Employer Services Team

SYPA has a dedicated team to assist employers with all aspects of their pension duties. Our engagement officers will be employers' first port of call for any staff training and presentation requests for both Payroll and HR issues to help them administer the scheme effectively.

They will also offer a range of presentations to scheme members to help them understand their pension benefits. Handover meetings will be provided from the point employers are admitted to the scheme, where our team will explain the services, we provide and cover the responsibilities of the employer. We offer seminars aimed primarily at topical and administrative issues as well as one to one meetings to help with any issues that may arise.

### Employers Pensions Information Centre (EPIC)

The Authority provides a central information centre where registered employers are able to access a whole range of information online including news and links to important documents. EPIC also provides statistical information to assist employers in understanding their scheme responsibilities.

### Employer Hub

The Authority also provides secure access to relevant scheme member information and allows employers to upload monthly data submissions and produce retirement quotes. Employer Hub is also used as a platform to contact and query member data securely.

### Employer Newsletter

From February 2025, these are now created monthly (previously quarterly) by our Engagement Officers for our employers and create a range of useful links and information for them and their employees. These are also used to promote any upcoming sessions, forums, focus groups or online training.

### Employer Forum

These are run annually, and all employer representatives are invited to attend. The Forum will cover topical events and include hybrid breakout sessions to discuss topics in more depth. Guest speakers will be invited to promote and discuss certain topics useful to employers. This is an opportunity for employers to network and meet the SYPA representatives.



## Employer Focus Group

Twice a year we hold Focus Groups with employers who have volunteered to take part. During the session our Employer Services team discuss up and coming issues that the employers need to be aware of and discuss the best approach and communications methods for these. The Focus Groups also allow employers the opportunity to request the creation of resources that will go on to our website or that can be passed on to their employees to limit queries on common issues. The sessions are collaborative and allow a mix of different size employers to come together and help each other solve problems and give suggestions. The outcomes of the discussions are then posted in the Employer Newsletter so that those employers who were unable to attend also receive the same information.

## Communicating with All Audiences

### Website ([sypensions.org.uk](https://sypensions.org.uk))

Our website is the main information hub for members, offering quick links, an A-Z guide, booklets, publications, and access to our **secure online portal (mypension)**. It also includes Authority meeting details under the 'About Us' section, where members can find agendas, minutes, reports, and live or recorded meetings.

### Secure Online Portal – 'mypension'

Members can register for mypension to manage their account, update personal details, make death grant nominations, and access retirement quotes. Active and deferred members can view annual benefit statements, while retired members can access monthly payslips and P60s.

### Pensions Information & Support

We provide a comprehensive pensions information service both in person and via video call. Members can book appointments online at [sypensions.org.uk/Contact/Appointments](https://sypensions.org.uk/Contact/Appointments).

We also offer special communication support for members with additional needs, including signers, interpreters, large print, audio CDs, and braille.

## Member Engagement & Events

We deliver group information sessions at members' workplaces, on demand, in partnership with employers. We also provide specialist sessions for those affected by organisational changes, such as public service transfers to private organisations.

Additionally, we participate in induction, mid-life, and pre-retirement courses, subject to demand. Members can attend sessions in person at Oakwell House or online, with recordings available on our website for those who cannot attend live.

Our SYPA: In Focus annual video update now replaces the Annual Fund Meeting as of 2024 (following member consultation), providing key updates from the Annual Report and answering member-submitted questions. A supporting PDF with all submitted questions is available on our website.

## Customer Centre

Our Customer Centre is the first point of contact for members and employers via:

**Telephone:** 0300 303 6160

**Email:** [customerservices@sypa.org.uk](mailto:customerservices@sypa.org.uk)

We also offer Live Chat for quick assistance and a more accessible option for those with hearing difficulties.

We continually improve our customer service, welcoming feedback and measuring performance through benchmarking.

## Additional Communication Channels

- **Text Messaging** – Used for reminders and key announcements when no email is available.
- **Social Media** – We currently engage with members via **Facebook, X (Twitter), and LinkedIn**, with tailored campaigns. A **Social Media Strategy** will be introduced in 2025 to expand on our future plans for member engagement using social media channels.
- **Video Content** – Recorded events, including member sessions, are uploaded to **YouTube and Vimeo** for easy access.
- **External Press Releases** – Issued throughout the year on investments, recruitment, and key updates.
- **Annual Report** – A comprehensive review of the Authority's activities over the past year.

## Key Risks

We have improved internal communications at South Yorkshire Pensions Authority and are using a range of digital tools to enhance collaboration across all departments in our hybrid working style.

In addition, we are developing a standalone **Social Media Strategy** to expand our engagement, particularly with younger members. This strategy will explore new platforms and content approaches to ensure our communications remain relevant, accessible, and engaging for all member groups.

The key risks to delivering this strategy are outlined below. The Senior Management Team, alongside other officers, will work with the Authority and the Local Pension Board to monitor these risks and develop appropriate responses over the period of this strategy.

### Staffing

- ◆ Lack of or reduction in skilled resources available due to difficulty retaining and recruiting staff.
- ◆ Staff absence due to sickness could delay the introduction of the proposed initiatives within the timeframe set.
- ◆ Failure to communicate with staff members in relation to scheme changes.
- ◆ Lack of decision making due to loss of Pensions Authority / Local Pension Board members could lead to delay in approval of new communications strategies.

### IT and Infrastructure

- ◆ Lack of adequate software or IT solutions - particularly in the digital communications area.
- ◆ Inability to deliver an efficient service to pension members due to system unavailability or failure.
- ◆ IT security breach resulting in loss of member data and/or unauthorised access to SYPA systems.

### Legislation and change in external environment

- ◆ Significant external factors, such as national change, impacting on workload.
- ◆ A major change to the LGPS legislative environment.
- ◆ Significant increase in the number of employing bodies causing strain on day-to-day delivery.

## Communication errors

- ◆ Issuing incorrect or inaccurate communications which could potentially result in legal/financial consequences.
- ◆ Failure to maintain scheme employer database leading to information not being sent to the correct person leading to GDPR compliance risks.
- ◆ Lack of clear communication to scheme employers, scheme members and pensioners.

## Member Engagement

- ◆ Limited participation from active members may result in an unbalanced representation of views, affecting the effectiveness of decision-making. Targeted strategies, such as extended consultation periods and enhanced outreach through employers, are needed to improve engagement.

## Costs

All costs relating to this Strategy are met by the Fund (unless indicated).

## Further Information

If you require further information about this Consultation, Communications and Engagement Strategy, please contact:

Joanne Webster, Service Manager - Customer Services, Tel: 0300 303 6160, email: [jwebster@sypa.org.uk](mailto:jwebster@sypa.org.uk)

Becci Illidge, Communications Business Partner, Tel: 0300 303 6160, email: [billidge@sypa.org.uk](mailto:billidge@sypa.org.uk)

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South Yorkshire Pensions Authority  
Oakwell House  
2 Beevor Court  
Pontefract Road  
Barnsley  
S71 1HG

Tel: 0300 303 6160

[www.sypensions.org.uk](http://www.sypensions.org.uk)