

ESSAR OIL (UK) PENSION SCHEME

Your 2025 newsletter

Contents

Chair's welcome	page 2
Getting online	page 3
Looking ahead with your Trustee	page 4
Staying safe from scams	page 5
Where to get help	page 6

Welcome

Welcome to your 2025 member newsletter. You'll notice we've got a slightly new look this year. This is to bring our newsletter branding in line with the other communications we send you – hopefully this helps you identify these messages as being from us, the Trustee, and you know that they're legitimate. With this in mind, we have a couple of articles in this year's newsletter about being aware of scams, on page 5, and how to stay safe when using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in relation to your pension, on page 4.

The newsletter is a little shorter this time round too, as we'll send you an update on the financial position of the Scheme separately. The Scheme undergoes a full valuation every three years and the Trustee and Company are currently working on the 31 July 2024 valuation. There is a lot of work that goes into a valuation, and once the valuation has been finalised we'll send you the results in a separate summary funding statement.

You may have seen the recent news about the new US tariffs and how they could affect savings and investments, and you might be wondering how this could impact your pension savings. We'd like to reassure you that although there has been some turbulence in the markets your Scheme pension is a defined benefit pension, which means that your pension benefits are based on your Scheme service and salary and are therefore not directly impacted by changes in investment markets.

We, along with the rest of the pensions industry, are preparing for the introduction of the new Pensions Dashboards platform which is being launched by the Government in the next couple of years. All pension schemes will connect to the Pensions Dashboards, and it will allow you to see all your pension savings in one place, including your State Pension. We've been working hard behind the scenes to ensure our systems are aligned with the Government's requirements, and we'll share further details as soon as they become available. As part of this process, we've updated our Privacy Notice, which you can read on our website at

<https://www.essaroilukpensionscheme.co.uk/resources/essar-privacy-notice/>

Finally, we have an update on what our priorities are, as a Trustee board, for the year ahead, as well as details of how you can get involved on page 4.

We're always keen to hear your opinion of the newsletter and our communications in general. Please contact the Scheme Administrator with your comments, or for any questions regarding your pension or benefits, using the details on the opposite page.

Yours sincerely

Janine Wood
Chair of the Trustee

Coming Soon...

It's a busy time of year for communications, so look out for your tax and annual allowance information which will be sent out later this summer.

If you have any questions about your pension, please contact the Scheme Administrator:

Tel: **0121 212 8102**

Email: **essaroil@hymans.co.uk**

Post: Essar Oil (UK) Pension Scheme
Administration, PO Box 27120, Glasgow G2 9NF

You can also raise a query on PRISM, by visiting **<https://www.essaroilukpensionscheme.co.uk/>**.
You can find more details of how to do this in the article below.

Please remember to let the Scheme Administrator know if any of your details change, so that we can keep in touch with you and make sure your benefits are paid on time.

*If you would like to find out more about how your personal data is used, please follow the link to the Hymans Robertson Trust Centre: **<https://www.hymans.co.uk/information/trust-centre>***

Your pension anytime, anywhere

PRISM is your personal pension portal, giving you instant access to all your Scheme information. Whether planning your retirement or already receiving your pension, PRISM has you covered.

On PRISM, you can view and update your personal information, like your address, contact preferences, nominated beneficiaries, and submit general enquiries online. There's also more you can do depending where you are in your pension journey.

If you haven't taken your pension yet, PRISM lets you:

- View your pension amount from when you stopped contributing to the Scheme
- View your estimated pension value at your Normal Retirement Age
- Explore transfer values
- Use the Pension Planner for retirement quotes

If you're already receiving your pension, PRISM enables you to view and print payslips and P60s, and review your pension in payment.

It's a secure way to manage your pension anytime. If you've not registered, visit **<https://www.essaroilukpensionscheme.co.uk/>** or scan the QR code to get started. There are four easy steps to get started and all you'll need is your National Insurance number and contact details to hand.



PRISM covers all your benefits in the Scheme. You can find out more about the Government's plans for Pensions Dashboards, which will cover all of your pensions, not just your Scheme pension, in the Welcome message on page 2.

Looking ahead with your Trustee

As the Trustee of the Essar Oil (UK) Pension Scheme, we are legally responsible for managing the Scheme and protecting the interests of you, its members. So we're really pleased to tell you more about what we've been doing and our priorities for the next 12 months.

One of our key priorities just now is ensuring the Scheme valuation is completed smoothly. This is a large piece of work, and is important to ensure we understand the Scheme's financial position. The safety and security of the Scheme is always a primary focus for us, and these valuations go a long way in helping us provide that reassurance. We're looking forward to sharing the results with you once they're ready.

Knowing your details are up to date is key too. Your Scheme pension can form a big part of your future. When it comes to time to take your retirement benefits from the Scheme, we want to ensure the process is as smooth as possible for you. It's also important if you're already being paid your pension from the Scheme too – we want to make sure that everything continues to run as efficiently as it can. We can all help make sure this continues by checking that the personal information

the Scheme Administrator holds for you is up to date. You can find more details of how to check your details, and update them if you need to, on page 3.

One of our biggest strengths as a Trustee board comes from the diverse mix of skills and experience that each one of our Trustee Directors brings. The board is made up of directors appointed by both the company and you, the members.

We'll shortly be opening applications to join us and become a Member Nominated Trustee Director (MND).

Andy Roberts' term as an MND was due to end in January this year, but with the Scheme's 2024 valuation still ongoing, we decided to extend his term by 12 months to ensure continuity in the Trustee Board during this time. In addition, Matthew Jessop has recently stepped down as MND after leaving employment in June. Look out for more information in due course, but if you have any questions about this in the meantime then please contact essar@hymans.co.uk.

Your Trustee Directors:

Company appointed directors	Member nominated directors
Janine Wood (Chair)*	Craig Thomas (Maintenance)
Michelle Bebbington (HR)	
Arvind Chopra (Assurance)	Andy Roberts (Operations)

* Representing Independent Governance Group as an Independent Trustee

Artificial Intelligence in Pensions

There's been a huge rise in the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) recently, with tools like ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and Meta AI all gaining prominence.

AI can provide quick and efficient access to information, help streamline processes, and provide personalised experiences. However, we need to act with extreme caution when it comes to making decisions about our pensions. **You should never put any personal information into the AI tools that you want to keep private.**

Pensions can be complex, and with the way AI tools work, it's likely they'll often give oversimplified answers to questions.

Financial advisers must complete extensive training to understand the intricacies of pension schemes and to qualify to become registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) so they can give advice. This knowledge isn't something AI tools are able to replicate, and therefore AI can give inaccurate and even risky recommendations. Information provided by AI tools is often generic, not taking your personal circumstances into account.

Although AI tools continue to improve, currently they are not a suitable substitute for professional, regulated financial advice. You can find out how to get regulated financial advice on page 6.

Staying safe from scams

Unfortunately, criminals are also making use of AI to create more realistic email and online scams.

Take these steps to make sure the information you receive from the Scheme is genuine:

- 1. Check the sender's email information e.g. the email address and phone number**
Fraudulent communications often look similar, but may include small changes (such as extra letters or misspellings).
- 2. Verify the website domain name – make sure the domain name of the website matches our official website**
Often scammers have domains that look like the real one but have subtle differences.
- 3. Look for HTTPS at the start of the website address**
HTTPS tells you that an additional encryption/authentication layer was added.
This is used at the start of our website:
<https://www.essaroilukpensionscheme.co.uk/>
- 4. Verify suspicious links by hovering over them**
You can hover over a link to see what website it will take you to. However, if you have any doubts about a link, it's safer just to go directly to our official website instead.
- 5. Look out for our logo and branding**
Our communications will always include our logo and colour schemes – any differences may indicate a scam. It's one of the reasons we've brought our newsletter branding in line with the other communications we send you.
- 6. Contact the Scheme Administrator if in doubt**
You can always contact our Scheme Administrator if you are unsure whether a communication is genuine. You can find their contact information on page 3.
- 7. Trust your instincts**
If something doesn't feel right or seems too good to be true, it probably is. It's always best to double check before taking any action.

By following these steps, you can remain vigilant when dealing not only with your pension benefits, but also any other online communications you receive.

Increase to Normal Minimum Pension Age

As a member of the Scheme, you have a **protected Minimum Pension Age of 55**. This means you can choose to take your benefits from the Scheme at age 55, even after the Government increases the Normal Minimum Pension Age.

The Government plans to increase the **Normal Minimum Pension Age (NMPA)** from **age 55 to 57** with effect from **6 April 2028**. The aim of this change is to keep the minimum pension age at around 10 years below the **State Pension Age**, which is gradually rising from **66 to 67** between 2026 and 2028.

The NMPA is set by the Government and applies unless you are retiring due to ill health or have a protected pension age. While your benefits in the Scheme are unaffected, this change **could impact any other pensions you have elsewhere**.

An update from the Autumn 2024 budget

Although there wasn't a lot of focus on pensions in the most recent Spring Budget, in the Autumn Budget at the end of last year, the Government proposed some changes that could affect how your pension is taxed after you die.

It has been proposed that from April 2027, any unused pension savings or lump sum death benefits may be included as part of your estate and therefore may be subject to Inheritance Tax (IHT).

Currently, the threshold amount before your estate might be liable to pay IHT is £325,000, unless you are leaving your estate to your spouse, civil partner or a charity. The threshold may increase to £500,000 if you're passing your home to your children. This includes adopted, foster and stepchildren.

In most cases, pensions aren't included when calculating the value of the estate before IHT is applied. However, if the proposal goes ahead, any pension benefits you have not yet accessed after death and any death lump sum benefits are expected to be included.

Do I need to do anything?

No, not at the moment. The proposal is going through a consultation process, and we're waiting for further guidance from the Government regarding any future changes that will take place.

If the proposal goes ahead, it could affect how your pension savings are treated after death, so you may want to speak to a regulated financial adviser who can help you to understand what this means for you.

If you're looking for financial advice, you can find more details on how to choose a financial adviser in the article below.

We'll keep you updated with any new information as soon as it's available. If you'd like to find out more about the current rules on IHT and pensions, please visit the Government's website, <https://www.gov.uk/inheritance-tax>.

Getting professional help

Making decisions about your pension can feel overwhelming. After all, your retirement could last more than 30 years – that's a long period of time to plan when it comes to your finances. If you want some help deciding what to do next, you may benefit from speaking to a financial adviser.

If you want more flexible options for your pension benefits and are considering transferring to another scheme. It's important to know that if your transfer value is more than £30,000, the law says you will have to take regulated financial advice first.

Help from LV=

That's where LV= comes in. We have appointed LV= to offer you a free chat with an LV= adviser. LV= are also offering a substantial discount to their standard fees for members of the Scheme, if you need additional sessions.

LV= is one of the UK's leading retirement solutions providers and highly experienced in offering regulated financial advice to people looking to access their pension benefits safely and securely. For more information visit <https://www.lv.com/essaroil>

All LV='s advice is completely independent and will be based on your personal circumstances – LV= will **not** be operating on behalf of the Trustee or the Company.

To speak to an adviser call: **0800 023 4391** (lines are open Monday to Friday from 9am to 6pm).

If you'd prefer to choose an adviser yourself, you can use MoneyHelper to find one in your area. You can find more details on page 7.

Help from MoneyHelper...

There are many aspects to your retirement finances, in addition to your workplace pension.

MoneyHelper is a government-backed website, offering information and help on everything related to your money. Its 'Pensions and retirement' page has tips on a range of topics from how to grow your retirement savings to working out how much State Pension you'll be entitled to and when you'll receive it.

Under the 'Pensions and retirement' tab, you can also use the 'Find a retirement adviser' tool to find a regulated financial adviser in your area.

MoneyHelper also gives links to a number of other useful organisations, including the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Visit <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/> and click on the 'Pensions and retirement' tab on the home page.

To track down a lost pension:

Millions of pounds goes unclaimed in pension funds every year. If you think you have a workplace pension which you've lost track of, the Pension Tracing Service may be able to help you free of charge.

Visit: <https://www.gov.uk/find-lost-pension>

Call: **0800 731 0175**

Text phone: **0800 731 0176**

You will need to have some information about the company you worked for – like the name of the company and your start and leave dates – along with your National Insurance number.

Help from the administrator

While the Scheme Administrator cannot provide you with advice about your pension, if you have any general questions about your pension or benefits, you can contact the Scheme Administrator in the usual way, using the contact details on page 3 of this newsletter.

**ESSAR OIL (UK)
PENSION SCHEME**