TEST REPORT

Release of 22 November 2026

Calculate My Pension · Prepared by Ed Jackson, Calculate My Pension Ltd · Published 24 November 2026

Summary

This release added onshore investment bonds, onshore bonds in the Asset Mix Calculator, the new rental income tax rates from April 2027, free AVCs with your main defined benefit (DB) pension, and a switch for a DB pension that's already being paid. It also fixed when a DB, NHS or LGPS pension can start.

Testing	What was done	Result
Unit testing	Each change checked while it was built, against figures worked out separately	Over 1,600 checks, all passed
Regression testing	257 test plans run on the release copy of the site	All 257 matched
ERIC testing	122 NHS and LGPS questions asked after the release	3 answers wrong or incomplete; causes found

How we test

Unit testing. Every new feature and fix is checked while it's built. We work out the figures separately, by hand or in a spreadsheet, using official sources such as HMRC's manuals, and compare them with the calculator's. We also run the existing test plans with the new feature switched off, to show nothing else has moved, and check the screens, PDF report and downloads in the browser. These checks are made on our development copy while the change is built. The release copy is then tested in full by the regression testing below.

Regression testing. We keep a library of test plans: made-up households covering single people and couples, many kinds of pension and savings, tax in Scotland and the rest of the UK, market crashes and more. For each plan we store results that have already been checked: every figure for every year of the plan. Before a release, every plan is run on the release copy and every figure is compared with the stored one. Any difference stops the release until we know why.

ERIC testing. ERIC words its answers differently each time, so they can't be compared word for word. We ask sets of real questions on test plans, as free and Premium users, and check that each answer quotes the figures on screen, explains rather than recommends, has links that open the right part of the page, and follows the free and Premium rules.

1. Unit testing

1.1 Onshore investment bonds (Premium)

What changed. You can now add an onshore investment bond, for yourself and your partner. CMP models the 5% yearly withdrawals within the tax-deferred allowance, cashing the bond in at an age you choose, and the tax on the gain, with top-slicing relief.

How we tested it

- **The tax on a bond gain:** 1,443 checks of the new tax calculation, including the two worked examples in HMRC's Insurance Policyholder Taxation Manual (IPTM3850) and our own worked examples. Without savings income, no existing tax result changed.
- **The bond in a full plan:** 129 checks worked out by hand, covering:
  - the withdrawals and the bond's value each year, with no 5% withdrawal in the year it's cashed in
  - the amount when cashed in, the gain and the tax
  - the general investment account (GIA), which the bond pays into, still adding up every year
  - cashing in before retirement, while still earning
  - a 30% market crash
  - someone already retired who has used up their 5% allowance
  - a historic market scenario
  - a partner's bond in a couple's plan
  - a free plan, which ignores the bond
- **On screen:** the charts, tables, Timeline, Plan Summary, PDF report and Excel download all show the bond and its tax. A bond saved to an account, for you and your partner, was still there after logging out and back in.
- **Nothing else moved:** at each stage of the build, the 160 core and feature-combination test plans, with no bond, gave identical results for free and Premium users.
- **New test plans:** 5, now run before every release: withdrawals at the basic rate; a gain that pushes into the higher rate; cashing in at 55 while working; a partner's bond; a free plan.

Worked example. A bond worth £800,000 today, with £300,000 paid in from 2024, cashed in at 70.

The gain at 70 is £846,900. Spread over 12 years, that's a slice of £70,575.

Tax on the slice: £39,109 at 24% and £31,466 at 44%, less the 24% treated as already paid, leaves £6,293.

£6,293 × 12 = £75,519. CMP shows £75,519.

A second example. A £416,000 bond cashed in at the higher rate: gain £316,000, tax £22,115, matching the top-slicing worked out by hand.

What isn't modelled

- Offshore bonds, and bonds held in trust or by a company
- The personal savings allowance and the starting rate for savings
- The tax paid inside the bond is a fixed rate you choose (20% unless you change it)

1.2 Asset Mix Calculator: onshore bonds and invested or cash holdings (Premium)

What changed. The Asset Mix Calculator can now hold onshore bonds (up to 5 each), and every holding can be part invested and part cash. The switch that uses the calculator's figures in your plan moved from the Analysis page to the calculator page.

How we tested it

- **26 checks of the calculator's bonds in the plan**, including:
  - a bond entered in the calculator, fully invested, gives the same results as the same bond entered in the plan itself, both while working and when already retired
  - 6% growth less 1% charges gives 5% growth after charges
  - a bond half in cash grows at the blended rate
  - two bonds cashed in together, each taxed over its own number of years, matching the tax calculation tested above
  - a partner's bond appears only in a couple's plan
  - a free plan ignores the calculator's bonds
- **Holdings saved before the change** load as the new cards and give identical plan figures: growth 5.87%, charges 0.80%, cash rate 4.22%.

- **The switch:** it can't be turned on with no holdings. Turning it on and off puts the plan's own figures back exactly (£150,000 pension, £40,000 ISA, 6% growth, 0.9% charges, 3% cash rate).
- **On screen:** a plan with a pension, an ISA and two bonds, one 25% in cash, uses both bonds (£240,000; £7,500 a year withdrawn; cashed in at 72), with the pension and ISA unchanged.
- **New test plans:** 17, covering pension and ISA holdings, invested and cash, one or several holdings, single and couple (both, you only, partner only), the Cash Buffer on top, already retired, the switch off, a free plan, no holdings and £0 holdings. Each was checked by hand against its expected figures (values, growth, charges and cash interest in the first year).

Expected change. In historic market scenarios, a bond's charges now come off the invested part before the tax inside the bond. At 0.25% charges this adds 0.05% a year to the bond's growth.

1.3 Tax on rental income from April 2027

What changed. The Budget on 28 October 2026 added 2 percentage points to the property income rates already announced. From 6 April 2027, rental income in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is taxed at 24%, 44% and 49% (CMP had 22%, 42% and 47%). 2026/27 and Scottish taxpayers are unchanged.

How we tested it

- **85 checks of the tax calculation:** the 24%, 44% and 49% bands; no personal allowance above £125,140; 2026/27 unchanged; Scottish and dividend results unchanged.
- **Nothing else moved:** of the 160 core and feature-combination plans, run as free and Premium users, only the 4 with rental income changed. The same 4 run as Scottish taxpayers were identical.

> **Worked example.** £3,909 of taxable rental income at 60 is taxed at 24%: £938, up from £860 at 22%.

Still to come. The Scottish Budget on 3 December 2026 may set Scottish property income rates. Until then CMP uses the Scottish rates for Scottish taxpayers' rental income.

1.4 AVCs with your main DB, NHS or LGPS pension (now free)

What changed. An additional voluntary contribution (AVC) with your main DB or LGPS pension is now free, for you and your partner, and is asked about when you first sign up. By default CMP takes as much of it as tax-free cash as the rules allow, and adds the rest to your pension pot. An NHS AVC is a separate pot, so it's added to your pension savings instead.

How we tested it

- **Nothing else moved:** 429 runs of the existing test plans gave identical results for Premium users and for free users without an AVC. Results moved only for free users holding an AVC, as intended.
- **The 25% rule and the Lump Sum Allowance** were checked by hand on the LGPS and generic DB examples below. An Additional DB Pension's AVC, a partner's AVC and the Lump Sum Allowance warning were checked in the browser with a Premium account.
- **Sign-up questions:** the desktop and phone questionnaires were checked with and without an AVC and for someone already retired, including the result lines they show.
- **Display:** the helper lines and warnings under the AVC inputs change nothing in the projection: 436 runs were identical.
- **New test plans:** 3. An LGPS member as a free user takes the whole £32,761 AVC tax free at 60. An LGPS member with a £150,000 AVC is capped at £102,105 tax free, with £61,699 going into the pension fund. A free user with a DB AVC takes £80,146 tax free, with £40,439 going into the fund.

Worked example (25% rule). An LGPS pension of £4,117 a year with a £150,000 AVC. HMRC limits tax-free cash to 25% of the value of the pension and the AVC together, with the pension valued at 20 times its yearly amount:

25% × (20 × £4,117 + £150,000) = £58,084 tax free, and £91,916 goes into the pension pot. CMP shows the same.

Worked example (generic DB). A free user with a £10,000 DB pension, a £30,000 lump sum and an AVC worth £93,178 at 60: capped at £50,795 by the 25% rule, with £42,384 going into the pension pot.

What isn't covered. An AVC with an Additional DB Pension stays Premium. An NHS AVC can't be used towards the NHS lump sum.

1.5 A DB pension that's already being paid

What changed. A new switch, "This pension is already being paid", for the main DB, NHS and LGPS pension, for you and your partner. The amount paid now rises with inflation in full each year, with no early retirement reduction, lump sum or start age.

How we tested it

- **Nothing else moved:** 438 engine runs from the test plans were identical with the switch off.
- **Checked directly:** you and your partner; the generic DB, NHS and LGPS cards; already retired; the switch on with no amount entered (no DB pension).
- **On screen and in the PDF report:** At a Glance, page 1 of the PDF, the key inputs, the charts, and the NHS and LGPS views, which are hidden for that person.
- **Sign-up questions**, desktop and phone, for the DB, NHS and LGPS cards.

Worked example. An NHS pension of £9,500 a year that's already being paid gives £9,528 a year at 60 in today's money, against £7,344 for the same pension not yet being paid.

1.6 When a DB, NHS or LGPS pension can start

What changed.

- A generic DB pension for someone still working can't now start before they retire (NHS and LGPS already worked this way).
- For someone already retired, CMP no longer chooses a start age.
- For an LGPS or NHS member still paying in, a claim age before retirement is now taken as the retirement age, not reduced and paid late.
- Where CMP chooses the start age, the chosen age is now stored and used in the plan you see, on the Analysis page and on Start Here.
- If "Let CMP choose" switches itself off, your own start age is put back.
- You can have one main DB pension (generic, NHS or LGPS) for each person, with a warning when switching between them.
- For couples, choosing the start ages is now quicker.

How we tested it

- **Nothing else moved:** 438 engine runs were identical; only plans with a generic DB pension starting before retirement for someone still working moved.
- **Faster couples search:** 138 couple plans (the test plans plus 108 made up for this) gave identical retirement and start ages, in 38% less time.
- **Claim age before retirement:** 432 runs were identical, apart from 4 NHS test plans that claimed before retirement on purpose. These were re-checked by hand and updated.

- **Stored start ages:** checked in the browser on an LGPS plan, before and after. Before, the plan showed the pension from 67 and a shortfall of £13,896 a year from 62 to 66. After, the pension is from 62 (£6,806 a year in today's money), with no shortfall.
- **Switching itself off:** 14 checks, including NHS and a partner's LGPS pension.

Worked example. An LGPS member chooses to claim at 62 but retires at 66. Before the fix: £7,503 a year, reduced as if taken at 62 but only paid from 66. After: £12,782 a year from 66.

1.7 Smaller fixes

- **ERIC's links on phones.** On a phone ERIC fills the screen, so a link opened the section behind it and nothing seemed to happen. ERIC now closes after a link is pressed (the conversation is kept). On pages without the calculator, a link now goes to the calculator and opens the section.
- **AVC wording.** When none of an AVC can be taken tax free because the Lump Sum Allowance is used up, the helper line now says so plainly.

2. Regression testing

Run. The full suite was run on the release copy of the site on 22 November 2026. 256 of 257 test plans matched first time. One stress-test plan didn't load within the 60-second limit; it matched when the full suite was run again on the same release copy on 23 November (257 of 257). The report confirmed that the site being tested was running the release copy's calculator.

Group of test plans	Plans
Core features	133
Feature combinations	18
Premium features	37
Stress Test and historic scenarios	25
NHS pensions	27
LGPS pensions	17
Total	**257**

What's compared. For each plan: the headline figures; every figure in every year of the plan (about 98 a year, and household totals for couples); the inputs the calculator actually used; and, where they apply, the Stress Test, NHS and LGPS summaries. About 1.3 million figures in all. A figure missing from the run counts as a failure.

Kind of figure	Must match to within
Allowance trackers (tax-free cash, annual allowance)	£1
Affordable income	0.5% (at least £5)
Ages	0.1 of a year
Fund and account balances	0.1% (at least £50)
All other amounts	0.1% (at least £1)

Plans changed on purpose (9). Each was checked by hand before its stored results were replaced.

- **5 plans with rental income**, because of the new 2027 rental rates. Example: £3,909 × 24% = £938, was £860 at 22%.

- **4 NHS plans** that claimed the pension before retirement on purpose. The pension is now paid from retirement, not reduced and paid late.

New test plans (25): 17 for the Asset Mix Calculator, 5 for onshore bonds, and 3 for AVCs (all described in section 1).

Noted, not a failure. The run reported the new onshore bond figures as new fields in the older plans' results. That's expected when a feature adds figures; they'll be stored the next time those plans' results are refreshed.

Limits. The test plans can't cover every combination of inputs. The suite reads the figures after a plan loads; it doesn't check how charts and tables are drawn. The tests run as if today were 1 June 2026.

3. ERIC testing

Changes to ERIC in this release. ERIC was given notes on onshore bonds, bonds in the Asset Mix Calculator, the 2027 rental rates, free AVCs, pensions already being paid, and having one main DB pension. For onshore bonds and AVCs, the figures ERIC reads from the page were checked in the browser. ERIC's links were fixed on phones (section 1.7).

Automated question runs. After the release, on 23 November, ERIC was asked 122 questions by our automated test harness: 51 about NHS pensions and 71 about LGPS pensions, logged in as both free and Premium users, each in a fresh chat on a test plan set up for it. These runs used our development copy, which also held some changes not in this release.

- Every question was answered.
- Every link in the answers opened the right part of the page.
- No answer made a recommendation ("I can't say whether you should..." and similar wording only).
- The answers used the right scheme rules and quoted the plan's own figures.

Wrong or incomplete answers (3)

Question area	What ERIC said	Cause
NHS lump sum, with the extra 1995 lump sum at 100%	Called the total the "automatic" lump sum, and said the extra lump sum setting added nothing	The page told ERIC each part's total lump sum, but not the extra lump sum setting
A partner's NHS pension	Said it couldn't tell whether the partner's NHS pension was switched on	The page sends ERIC partner details for the LGPS but not for the NHS
LGPS mode switched off	Said the plan was already in LGPS mode	The LGPS Pension Details section shows even with the mode off

The causes are found. Fixing them is planned for a coming release, and the questions will be asked again then.

What testing doesn't cover

- The test plans are made-up households, so they can't cover every combination of inputs.
- The calculator checks look at the figures, not at how the charts and tables are drawn.
- ERIC can still get things wrong. If you spot a wrong answer, please use Report a Bug.
- CMP's projections rest on assumptions, and they aren't financial advice.

Questions about this report: ed@calculatemypension.co.uk