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Web maintenance will take place on Sunday 28 April. We apologise for any inconvenience.

Caroline's story

Caroline's 56, from Leeds and teaches languages. We asked her to share her story about the process of retiring from the Scheme.

What first led you to teaching?

"I started teaching later in life at 30. I'd already worked in the travel industry and developed my language skills through that.

I then worked in logistics using languages but decided this wasn't for me and started to think about going into teaching to transfer the skills into the education arena. Ultimately I wanted to work in a people centred role and feel like I was doing something rewarding.



What do you enjoy most about teaching?

"I enjoy working with young people and helping them develop their skills. It's always great to see them go on and study languages at University. Teaching has a certain level of autonomy, which I find appealing because when there's success you feel responsible."

Is planning for your future important and how has Teachers' Pensions helped you?

"When I first went into teaching I worked part-time so didn't go into the pension scheme straight away. I entered the scheme in 1996 - when I had been qualified 5 years. I knew it was important as I had young children and wanted to ensure a future where we were financially supported as a family.

"Planning for my future has always been important but if I could do one thing differently with my pension I wish I had started and thought about it earlier. That would be my advice to younger people whether they're in teaching or not."

When you're young, retirement seems miles off - but it's not. If you can contribute more and grow your pension faster - then do it! Teachers' Pensions offer ways for you to grow your pension quicker, which looking back I should have taken. I'd advise people to pay more attention to what's available to help you save more. You need a lot of energy teaching and as you get older you might want to cut down your hours or even retire earlier. Saving more earlier gives you more choice as you get older."

Do you use My Pension Online?

"I think you naturally get more interested in retirement at my age and I've found My Pension Online very helpful when it comes to answering a lot of my questions.

When you're in your 50s you start looking at what you're likely to get in retirement and I've used the calculator online, which tells you what sort of lump sum you can expect and your yearly pension amount. I'm looking at taking early retirement and there's lots of help online. I like to speak to someone before making any firm decisions so I've spoken to Teachers' Pensions and they're always really helpful and happy to answer my questions."

What are you looking forward to during retirement?

"There are so many things I'd like to do - travel more - see a bit of the world and take longer breaks. Not even abroad necessarily - just having that bit of extra time to walk and explore.

I would like to volunteer once I retire and would even like to go back into a school to help with any extra tuition needs pupils might have. It's also great to know that I could go back into teaching part-time after I retire if I want to."

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