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# Pensions Age Spring Conference: Excelling in a changing landscape

✓ **Endgame solutions, tackling administration challenges, the debate around surplus, CDC in retirement, targeted support, private markets in DC, value for money, and member engagement and empowerment were just some of the hot topics of discussion at this year's Pensions Age Spring Conference**

This year's Pensions Age Spring Conference was another great success, with record numbers of trustees, scheme managers, consultants and providers gathering at the Hilton London Tower Bridge to hear presentations, take part in Q&As, and network with their colleagues and industry peers.

Highlights included keynote speeches from Pensions Minister, Torsten Bell;

Pension Protection Fund (PPF) chief investment officer, Barry Kenneth; and Money and Pensions Service (Maps) chief executive, Oliver Morley. The agenda also featured interactive audience sessions, real-world case studies, fireside chats and perspectives from pensions representatives at Heka Global and the Boots Pension Scheme, among others, making it a day rich in insight, discussion and practical learning.

Experienced pension professional and independent

trustee, Jerry Gandhi, did a great job chairing the proceedings, encouraging healthy discussion and debate throughout the sessions.

Many thanks to the chairman, to our sponsors and to everyone who attended. We look forward to catching up with the industry again at our two upcoming conferences, the Pensions Age Northern Conference on Thursday 11th June in Leeds, and our Autumn Conference on 17th September in London.





**Barnett Waddingham head of pensions governance, Lucy Cresswell; Festina Finance UK country head, Dan McLaughlin; and Heka Global head of UK pensions, Hattie Tales, set the scene** by looking at whether it was possible to create an alternative or better system that balances state, occupational, and individual provision for a fairer, more sustainable retirement landscape.



**L&G head of investment advisory, Victoria Myers, and head of insurance and endgame solutions, Mathew Webb,** looked at practical ways for well-funded schemes to generate surplus whilst maintaining or improving funding levels.



**Lumera head of bulk annuity solutions, Samantha Chandler; Boots Pension Scheme former head of pensions, Steve Jones; and Lumera head of technical research, Rebecca Morgan,** explored how Boots overcame the administration challenges of tackling endgame, to deliver a full buy-in in just 12 months.



**Minister for Pensions, Torsten Bell,** offered delegates his thoughts on the brand new Pension Schemes Act and its likely impact on the future of pensions.



**Wealth at Work national business development manager, John Waterson,** explored the role employers and trustees can play in empowering employees to achieve stronger retirement outcomes in an evolving landscape.



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**Apollo Global Management, managing director, UK defined contribution, Jesal Mistry**, looked at why scale matters in bringing private markets to DC and explored how manager scale can unlock improved sourcing, enhanced due diligence, stronger governance, fee efficiency and better access to co-investments in the DC space.



**Vidett professional trustee, Duncan Willsher**, and **client director, Clare Routledge**, presented an interactive session allowing the audience to choose the direction of travel to achieve value and meet objectives as the industry transitions through a world of change.

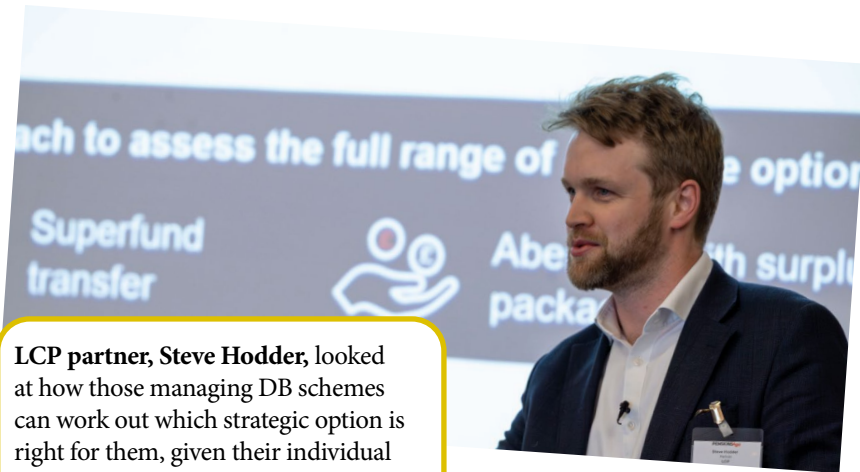


**Gallagher head of culture change, Aidan Hewitt**, and **communications strategy partner, Shaily Sodha-Carr**, explored how, in a high-pressure pensions landscape, communication and change can work together, creating clarity when certainty is gone, resilience when energy is low, and cultures where people stay engaged, accountable and motivated to perform.



**Schroders Solutions global co-head of client solutions, Ajeet Manjrekar**, and **Schroders business development director, James Wall**, looked at how DB surpluses can create new choices for schemes and sponsors, and how that flexibility can help drive better DC outcomes.





**LCP partner, Steve Hodder,** looked at how those managing DB schemes can work out which strategic option is right for them, given their individual circumstances and key objectives, showcasing Stagecoach's pioneering transaction to swap sponsorship of their scheme to Aberdeen.



**Aon associate partners, Madalena Cain and Steven Leigh,** focused their session on the retirement income pathway, comparing the main options emerging in the market and some of the trade-offs, while also considering the merits of CDC in retirement.



**Pension Protection Fund chief investment officer, Barry Kenneth,** looked at how, in a world shaped by geopolitical tension, shifting inflation dynamics and rapid regulatory change, schemes can identify the signals that truly matter for long-term value.

**Maps chief executive, Oliver Morley,** provided an update on pensions dashboards, with insights from recent user testing of the MoneyHelper dashboard.

