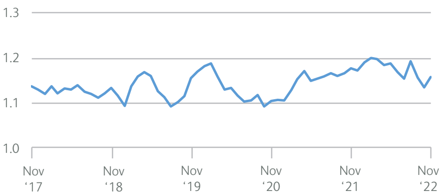
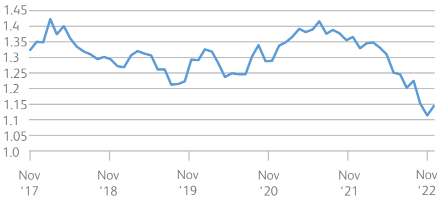
Help For Wealth

financial
Newsletter
Edition 40 – 2022

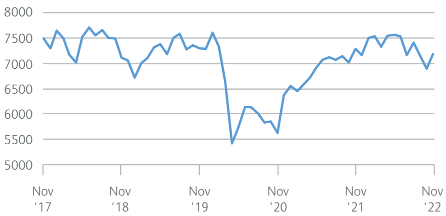
What is the British Pound worth vs. Euro?



What is the British Pound worth vs. Dollar?



FTSE 100 Chart



Bank of England Base Rate

The Bank of England Base Rate is currently 3%.

Inflation

Inflation (CPI) 11.052% October 2022.

UK Economic Outlook

- In April 2022, median weekly earnings for full-time employees increased across all but one sector-level industries, compared with April 2021. This was particularly strong in the accommodation and food service activities sector, which increased 18.7%, mainly because of having a high furlough rate and associated loss of pay in 2021.
- In the latest period, 93% said their cost of living had increased compared with a year ago, while 80% of adults reported their cost of living had increased over the last month. The main reasons reported were increases in the price of food (92%), gas or electricity bills (78%) and fuel prices (46%).
- Retail footfall across the UK rose over the autumn half-term week in England (to 30 October 2022), to 110% of the level seen in the previous week. This reached 92% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019; the highest level relative to 2019 seen since the week ending 5 June 2022.
- Footfall in retail parks was closest to pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic levels, at 96%, while footfall in shopping centres was lowest at 85%.
- UK residents made 7.8 million summer visits overseas in June, spending an estimated £6.2 billion. This is still 15% lower than in the pre-pandemic holiday month of June 2019, when there were 9.1 million overseas visits by UK residents.

Unemployment

- The UK unemployment rate for June to August 2022 decreased by 0.3 percentage points on the quarter to 3.5%, the lowest rate since December to February 1974. The number of people unemployed for between 6 and 12 months increased on the quarter, while there were decreases for the short-term (up to 6 months) and long-term (over 12 months) unemployed. In June to August 2022, the number of unemployed people per vacancy fell to a record low of 0.9.
- The economic inactivity rate increased by 0.6 percentage points to 21.7% in June to August 2022, compared with the previous quarter (March to May 2022), which had a notably lower economic inactivity rate than other periods. This increase in the latest quarter was largely driven by those aged 50 to 64 years and those aged 16 to 24 years. Looking at economic inactivity by reason, the quarterly increase was driven by people inactive because they are long-term sick or because they are students. Numbers of those economically inactive because they are long-term sick increased to a record high.
- In July to September 2022, the estimated number of vacancies fell by 46,000 on the quarter to 1,246,000, this is the largest fall on the quarter since June to August 2020. Despite three consecutive quarterly falls, the number of vacancies remain at historically high levels.

The Consumer Prices Index

- The Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) rose by 8.8% in the 12 months to September 2022, up from 8.6% in August and returning to July's recent high.
- The largest upward contributions to the annual CPIH inflation rate in September 2022 came from housing and household services (principally from electricity, gas and other fuels, and owner occupiers' housing costs), food and non-alcoholic beverages, and transport (principally motor fuels).
- The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rose by 10.1% in the 12 months to September 2022, up from 9.9% in August and returning to July's recent high.
- Rising food prices made the largest upward contribution to the change in both the CPIH and CPI annual inflation rates between August and September 2022.
- The continued fall in the price of motor fuels made the largest, partially offsetting, downward contribution to the change in the rates.

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Five reasons to stay in your workplace pension

There are a number of important benefits you could lose if you choose to opt out of pension scheme.

The minimum amount that people have to contribute into their workplace pension has increased. While it's widely expected that most people will choose to stay in the pension scheme, there's always the freedom to opt out. So why should you stay in your workplace pension?

1. Your boss pays in too

Pensions are a form of deferred pay, especially when it comes to the money your employer pays in. Not only does your firm pay you a wage, they put money into a pension so that you have income in retirement.

The amount they put in varies. There's a minimum amount they're required to contribute by law, but many employers go further than this, particularly if you also increase your contribution. If you opt out of the workplace pension, it's like turning down free money, because your employer will stop paying in as well.

2. You get help from the government through tax relief

When you earn money you pay income tax, usually at a standard rate of 20%, but at 40% or 45% if you are a higher earner. When you choose to put some of that money into a pension scheme, you no longer have to pay tax on it. What this means in practice is that, if you want to put £1 into a pension, it'll only cost you 80p if you pay tax at the standard rate – the government puts in the other 20p.

For most high earners, the advantages could be even greater.* For someone paying tax at 40%, it only costs them 60p, because the government contributes the other 40p. A combination of tax relief and a scheme where an employer matches what you put in means you could get £2 in a pension (one from you and one from your employer) at a cost to you of just 80p. There aren't many investments that can match that.

3. You get access to a tax-free lump sum

Later in life, when you're thinking about taking money out of your pension, you can usually take a quarter of the whole pot tax free. This means that you pay no tax on your contributions, get tax breaks on the growth of the money inside your pension, and then can take out a good chunk with no tax at the end. Again, there aren't many investments that have a tax treatment as advantageous as this.

4. Your pension scheme may pay out to your loved ones if you die

The main aim of a pension scheme is to provide you with something to live on when you're retired. But many pension schemes will have additional benefits if you were to die or be seriously ill.

Some salary-related pension schemes will offer you something called 'ill health early retirement', where you can draw a pension before normal pension age if you can't work, and most pension schemes offer some form of payout if you were to die. This can sometimes be a multiple of your annual salary and can be very valuable to loved ones you leave behind.

5. You'll have more choice over when to retire

Ultimately, the purpose of pensions is to replace your wage when you're ready to stop work. The more you have in pension rights, the more choice you have about when you can afford to retire. There would be nothing worse than deciding you're ready to stop work but realising you have to carry on – possibly for years – because you haven't built up enough to live on.

Although it's always tempting to boost your income today, it comes at a cost. Opting out now and giving up on the money your employer puts in will greatly reduce your pension at retirement and could mean that you're still going into work long after the point when you're ready to stop.

You can find more information about workplace pension schemes and the benefits of automatic enrolment on the MoneyHelper website.

** People with a taxable income of more than £150,000 should seek further independent advice regarding their tax position in relation to their workplace pension*

Author: Chris Kane, Royal London

Five fundamentals of Estate Planning

Start making plans now to ensure your loved ones are prepared for the future. In this short article you'll find some tips to help you take the first steps.

1. Start planning early

Planning what happens to your money and possessions when you die aims to:

- Make sure your money goes to the people whom you want to give it to
- Reduce or even eliminate inheritance tax to leave more to those you love
- Ensure that your wishes are carried out without unnecessary expense or delay

This might sound simple but managing the transfer of your money and possessions after you're gone is a complicated area with many financial and legal hurdles. The best way to avoid unwanted consequences is to start making plans as soon as you can.

2. Make a will and review it regularly

Do you know that if you don't have a will, then your estate will be shared according to set rules which may be different from your wishes? The consequences can be devastating for those you leave behind.

If you've already made a will, that's great. Please just make sure it's kept up to date. A change in family circumstances, changes in inheritance tax rules and wider legislation can all affect your will.

It's recommended that you review your will at least every five years.

3. Set up a Power of Attorney

Sometimes people wrongly think because they have a will they don't need a Power of Attorney (POA), but this isn't true. The POA lets you appoint someone you trust to make financial and/or medical decisions for you if you're not able to do so. For example, if you become ill.

It might help to think of a will as something that helps your loved ones after you die, whereas a POA is designed to help you while you're still living.

Another common mistake people make is thinking that the POA means you've automatically handed over control to someone else, but again this simply isn't true. It can start immediately, or you can opt for it to kick in when you're no longer able to act in your own best interests. It's important to note if you're giving someone POA, there are restrictions on gifts they could make from your estate.

While this rule is there to help keep you safe, it does also limit the ways to help reduce IHT. This is a specialist area and those involved should always speak to an adviser.

4. Make sure you know who stands to inherit your pension

It's a strange anomaly, but your will doesn't decide who inherits your pension. When setting up a pension, you normally have to complete a "nomination of beneficiary" form. The people you list on that form will normally inherit your pension when you die.

Over the years, it can be easy to forget who you've nominated to inherit your pension. This information can also change and quickly becomes out of date if your circumstances have changed. If you're not sure who inherits your pension, your adviser can help and can also update your beneficiaries form if needed.

5. Speak to your loved ones about these documents

This is often the step that's forgotten about. It's really important to have these documents and keep them up to date, but it's even more important your loved ones know how to get hold of them when they're needed. By letting your loved ones know in advance you've done this important planning, it can make it a lot easier on them at what could be a very difficult time.

The 5 basic steps to help you get started planning for what you leave behind:

- Start planning early
- Make a will and review it regularly
- Set up a Power of Attorney
- Know who stands to inherit your pension
- Speak to your loved ones about your plans

Author: Vince Smith-Hughes, Pru

Cybersecurity

Addressing the behaviours that can pose a risk

Today, we very much live in an online world. Not only do we book holidays or arrange the weekly shop online, we also routinely conduct our banking and view our investments over the web too. The benefits are many but there are risks too. If you're not careful and don't follow internet best-practice, you're more at risk of being targeted by a cybercriminal.

Fidelity's cybersecurity team has investigated why individuals may be unable to operate in the most secure way possible. From this, they have identified four different mindsets that help explain why this might be and what remedial steps people can take to help change their online behaviour.

1. You're most vulnerable when you're in a hurry

Some of us don't feel we have the time to take the right security measures. Alternatively, we may feel getting what needs to be done completed is more important than doing it right.

Criminals are aware of this mindset and try to exploit it. They know you are most vulnerable when you're in a hurry and they craft expert attacks designed to take advantage of this. So, for instance, stopping for a few seconds to double check if a query or request from your bank or financial adviser is genuine can help prevent financial fraud. In particular, it's better to pause, reject or refuse requests if there is any pressure for a quick response or action.

2. Distraction can lead to unintentional errors

Today, many of us are constantly bombarded with emails, messages and phone calls. It can be hard to cut through all the noise to spot something that's potentially dangerous. This can lead to clicking on suspicious links, visiting dubious websites or unintentionally revealing confidential information to a fraudster.

The trouble is, with so much going on, how can you know what presents a risk or not? The key to staying cyber safe is to find your focus. A good first step is to be aware of threats and to know how to counter them.

3. Time to challenge old habits

The threat from cybercrime is constantly evolving. If you fail to keep pace, you risk being caught out. Maybe you've always done things a certain way and remained safe. That doesn't mean this will always be the case. It just means you could be next. If you use weak passwords, reuse passwords across sites and accounts and fail to update operating systems and security patches on devices, you could become an easy target.

Now's the time to change your mindset – don't just read about security best-practice, make a conscious decision to actually implement the advice.

4. Back yourself if something doesn't seem quite right

Most of us have quite effective inbuilt detectors that can help determine when an email, message or call is genuine or not. Little things seem off or out of the ordinary – from grammatical mistakes in an email to requests for account information in an unusual format.

Where many of us go wrong is by not acting on our suspicions. This may result in suspected attacks going unreported or a fraudulent instruction being processed. We need to learn to trust ourselves, and those instincts, and report, challenge or delete whenever we feel wary or uncertain.

To keep on top of all the latest threats and advice, our guide 'Keeping yourself cyber safe at home, online and on the move' can be downloaded at *fidelity.co.uk/clients* and provides further information, reminders, and tips on this important subject. The web has unquestionably changed our lives for the better, but it's important to keep yourself safe, especially when accessing financial information online.

Author: Lesley Davidson, Fidelity International

Important information

Four lenses for looking through market volatility

Markets have been volatile this year, particularly US markets like the S&P500. While corrections are an inevitable feature of investing, they can be difficult times to navigate. This is because investing is prone to being derailed by a range of psychological biases that can trigger emotional decision-making. Emotional decisions can be hazardous to building portfolio wealth. This article looks at some of the major biases and how you can avoid them.

1. Don't overtrade or change strategies – it's bad for long-term returns

'Time in the market beats timing the market' is a well-worn expression in investing circles because it is one investing proverb that is borne out by the data. By analysing the transaction data of over 60,000 investors in a brokerage company, Barber and Odean (2000) found that the average after-cost return for investors who traded the most was 11.4%, which compared to 18.5% for those who traded the least, while the market return was 17.9%[1].

A key driver of the underperformance was the transaction costs associated with higher turnover, but overconfidence was also a factor. For those more active investors who believe they can time market cycles, the evidence suggests chopping and changing is often a path to lower returns.

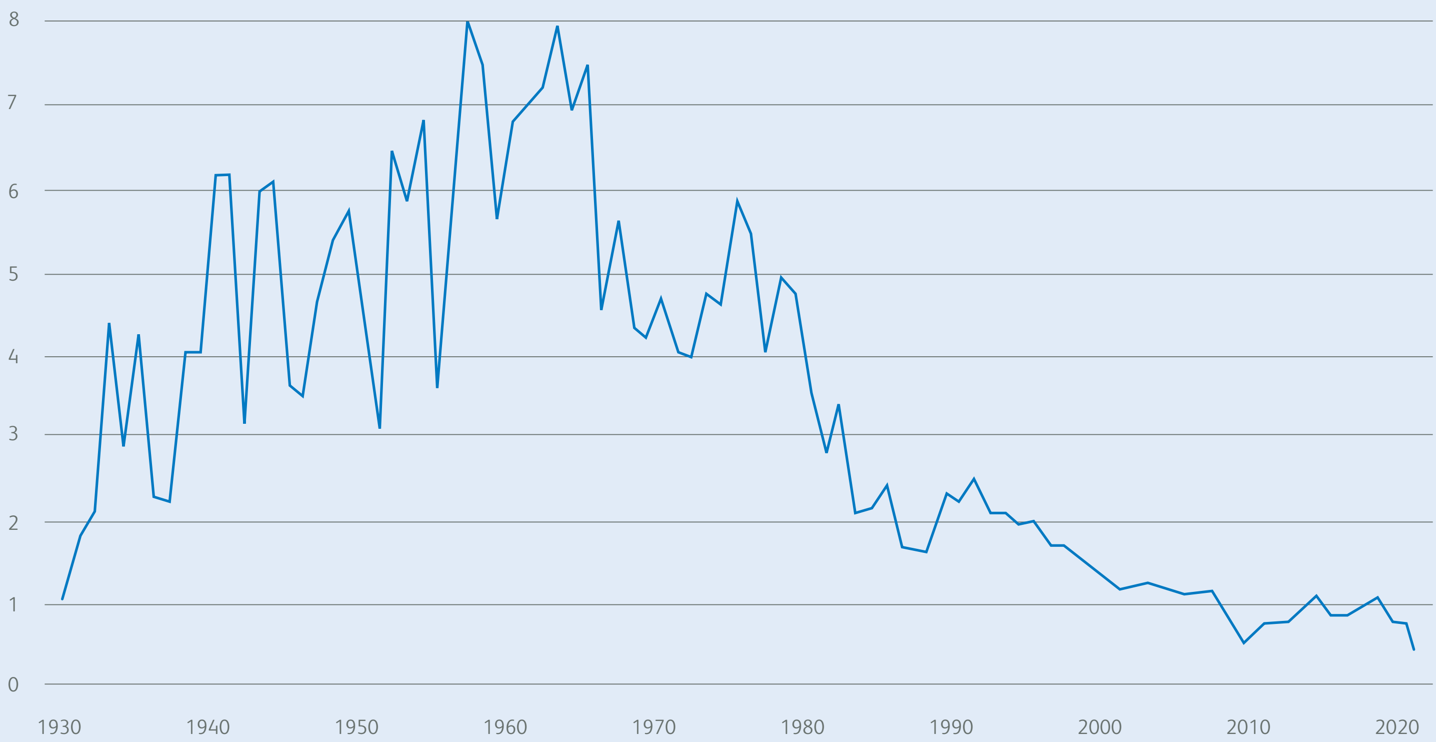
2. Keep a longer-term time horizon

If time in the market is the secret to building wealth, then short termism is one of the greatest risks. Unfortunately, as soon as volatility shows up in a quarterly performance update, time horizons tend to shorten dramatically.

The problem of short termism in markets has been getting worse. In the US, the average holding period of a share on the NYSE was around seven years in the 1960s; by June 2020 this had fallen to six months. Short termism is not confined to 'retail' investors either – even the focus of Wall Street analysts is overwhelmingly on forecasting company earnings for only the next one or two years.

The best way for most investors to get an edge in a myopic market, dominated by high frequency traders like hedge funds and day traders, is to take a longer-term view than the market.

Signs of short termism: shrinking holding periods of stocks (in years)



Sources: *NYSE, Refinitiv*
Note: *Holding periods measured by value of stocks divided by turnover*

3. Don't blindly follow the herd

Given the strong herding instinct in markets, a bout of selling pressure can prompt some investors to question their investment choices. Why are other investors selling? Do they know something I don't? The evidence suggests the answers to these questions can be surprisingly irrational. In his analysis of the 1987 market crash, Robert Shiller demonstrated that when investors were asked why they were selling, many said 'because everyone else was selling'[2].

In stock markets, herding can cause share prices to get ahead of themselves when everyone is optimistic and subsequently get oversold when everybody becomes too gloomy.

4. Avoid buyer's remorse

History shows that different assets perform well at different times. However, there is a psychological pain known as buyer's remorse attached to investing in a chosen asset that subsequently performs poorly. Regret is one of the strongest-felt emotions and it is more pronounced the narrower the strategy. Buyer's remorse tends to be very high (and painful) for investors with their entire portfolio allocated to a single asset or sector fund when that asset or sector subsequently underperforms.

Multi asset portfolios offer an effective way of dealing with 'buyer's remorse'. By investing in a range of assets with different risk/reward characteristics, investors can avoid the binary pain associated with putting too much capital in one asset only to see it fall out of favour.

Final thought

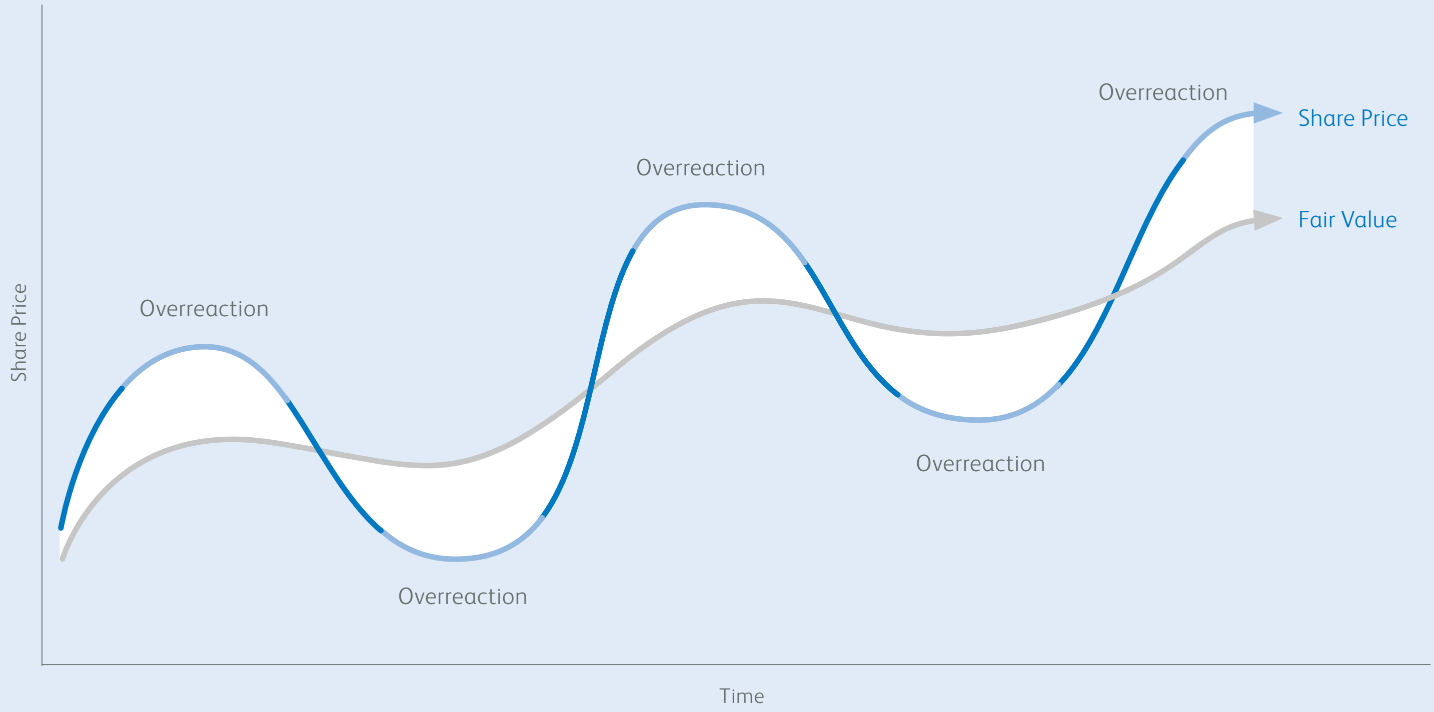
A long-term, risk-aligned investment strategy teamed with the discipline to stay the course can be a powerful combination in avoiding a range of potentially damaging investing biases. The ability to focus on the long-term outcome and not become overly concerned about the path is a critical part of every patient investor's journey. Volatile times are when that discipline is most tested.

[1] *Brad Barber & Terence Odean; "Trading Is Hazardous to Your Wealth: The Common Stock Investment Performance of Individual Investors", Journal of Finance, (April 2000)*

[2] *Robert J Shiller, 'Investor Behavior in the October 1987 Stock Market Crash: Survey Evidence'*

Author: Nick Armet, Content Strategy Lead, Embark Group.

Herding can cause share prices to overreact in both directions



For illustrative purposes only.

Seeking investment talent

We explore how Omnis appoints third-party managers to run funds to provide access to the best investment talent in the market.

Omnis Investments (Omnis) offers clients of The Openwork Partnership and 2plan Wealth Management a range of 26 funds. They appoint third-party investment managers, allowing investors access to the best talent in the market. No matter how big you are as an investment house, you can't have the best investment managers for every single asset class - it is Omnis' job to find the best managers out there.

Investment managers move firms and retire. The Omnis model means the team can decide if and when they need to find a new investment manager and then manage the transition without investors having to buy and sell funds. In other models, if your fund manager leaves, you would sell the fund and switch manually to another one, which can be a lengthy process. It would leave investors uninvested during the period and could sometimes lead to taxation events and charges.

Omnis has the responsibility for making sure investors always know what's going on in the funds. The team can provide detailed information because they are able to monitor each fund manager, and make sure they are always investing in line with the funds' investment objectives.

Manager selection

Omnis works with external specialist research firm Fundhouse to make sure it can identify the best investment managers. There are more than 100,000 funds globally, which is more than the number of listed stocks, so Omnis distils these into a more manageable list and contacts managers to discuss their processes and capabilities.

That list then gets further refined to a shortlist of about five managers. Omnis then asks for more detailed information in writing and meets each team in person to gain an understanding of their investment approach. Omnis now manages more than £10 billion on behalf of its investors, and this size provides the level of access needed to fully assess managers.

Omnis tests each manager's investment process with the data on other funds they manage to verify the information. A shortlist of investment managers then present to the Omnis Investment, Performance and Risk Committee, which will recommend its preferred investment manager to the Omnis board.

Sustainable investing

Omnis assesses whether the managers are incorporating environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors into their investment decisions. The team sends each potential manager an ESG questionnaire at the start of the selection process. If they don't pass our ESG requirements, they don't progress any further. Omnis looks for examples of how they're incorporating these sustainability factors, as well as getting a feel for their culture internally.

Incorporating ESG factors into investment decisions is not as straightforward as you might think, and once they are appointed as managers Omnis continually reviews their approach to ESG and reports back to investors.

Ongoing monitoring

Once a manager is appointed, the ongoing monitoring kicks in. Omnis has regular meetings with the managers in person, and access to the portfolios so that the team can see all individual holdings at all times, allowing Omnis to make sure the funds are being run appropriately.

As the funds are continuously overseen by Omnis, the team can intervene when it is in the interest of clients. For example, on 11th February 2022, Omnis instructed all its investment managers to sell all holdings in Russia and Ukraine. This meant at the point when Russia invaded, there was zero direct exposure to Russia or its currency in the Omnis funds. Swiftly after the invasion, Moscow banned foreign investors from selling Russian investments, but this was not a problem for investors in Omnis' funds as Omnis had already taken action to remove all investments in Russia.

Although the performance of each underlying fund is important, Omnis does not recommend buying them individually. They should form part of a diversified portfolio to reduce risk and provide exposure to a diverse range of opportunities across asset classes, geographical regions, and industry sectors.

Your adviser will work with you to establish what the correct portfolio of Omnis funds is most suitable to you.

The value of investments and any income from them can fall as well as rise and you may not get back the original amount invested.

Author: Paul Heaphy, Omnis


AAPL 120.30 +0.87%
MA5:119.126 MA10:100.960 MA20:80.659
150.000
140.000
137.980
130.000
120.300
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Cost of living and protection

The roaring 20s hasn't exactly delivered in the way many of us hoped. From a global pandemic to a cost of living crisis in the UK and elsewhere, it's fair to say we've been living through turbulent times. To help you make sense of what this all means for your family finances and insurance needs, we've put together a quick guide to the cost of living crisis.

Explaining the current crisis

In the UK, the 'cost of living crisis' is a term familiar to millions and refers to the fall in real disposable incomes (taking into account inflation, taxation and benefits) experienced by British households and businesses since late 2021.

Against a backdrop of rising energy costs and disruption to global supply chains, the UK has experienced double-digit inflation for the first time in more than 40 years, forcing many households to think carefully about tightening their belts.

According to the Office for National Statistics, 68% of adults who are feeling very worried about the rising cost of living have reported spending less on non-essentials. They also report that in early to mid-May 2022, weekly UK credit and debit card purchases had decreased by 6% and that people eating in restaurants had decreased by 10%.

The importance of your Life insurance

In these turbulent times, many families are understandably looking to reduce their spending, whether it's cutting back on takeaways or filling up the car less regularly. So it's tempting to think you could do without life insurance amid this worrying cost of living crisis. However, for the reasons we explain below, keeping your life insurance policy could be worth it. Here's why:

- You could pay more later. Any life insurance quote you're offered will be based on your circumstances at the time, such as your age, smoker status and health history. That's why life insurance is generally cheaper when you're younger. If you were to cancel and later take out another policy, your premiums might be higher and if your health changes it could be more difficult to get cover.
- You won't get your money back. The life insurance premiums you've paid to date will be non-refundable unless you're cancelling within 30 days of the policy start date.
- Your family won't have cover. If you're looking to cancel your life insurance as a way to save money, but without replacing it with another policy, your loved ones won't have financial protection if you were to pass away. With the rising cost of living millions of people in the UK are having to make difficult decisions about their money and what they can afford. Less disposable income for many households, means life insurance could be more important than ever. Life Insurance could financially protect your loved ones when they need it most, with a cash sum to help pay the mortgage, debts, or contribute to everyday living expenses if you were to die while covered by the policy.

Out of adults who said they were very worried about the rising cost of living

Source: *ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/worriesabouttherisingcostsoflivinggreatbritain/apriltomay2022*

Hints and tips

If you're looking to watch your spending while prices soar, you're definitely not alone. Below, we've put together some tips to help you save money –from food shopping to energy bills.

1. Reduce your subscriptions

Wondering how to start saving money? You could look at your bank statement and see if there are any recurring payments to services you don't use anymore (or might want to cancel). This could include streaming services or magazine subscriptions.

2. Cut the takeaway coffees

The caffeine addicts among us might not take this one lightly, but resisting the temptation to grab that morning macchiato could give your bank balance a boost. If you know how to use a cafetiere, you can save money at home more quickly than you might think.

3. Get smart with your energy bills

One way to save money on energy bills is to use your appliances outside the peak hours of 6-9pm. Other money saving tips include turning down your thermostat, investing in a smart meter, and washing clothes at lower temperatures.

4. Change your exercise habits

It's always a good idea to embrace healthy living, but some forms of exercise are kinder to your wallet. Instead of the monthly gym membership, what about jogging in the park, wild swimming (where possible), or even a home workout?

5. Change the way you drive

Fuel prices have sky-rocketed, but you can reduce your petrol consumption by making small changes to the way you drive, such as easing off the gas and avoiding unnecessary braking. Alternatively, you could ditch the car altogether if you're able to walk or cycle to work. According to Transport for London, the number of people cycling in the capital is almost 25% higher than before th eCOVID-19 pandemic.

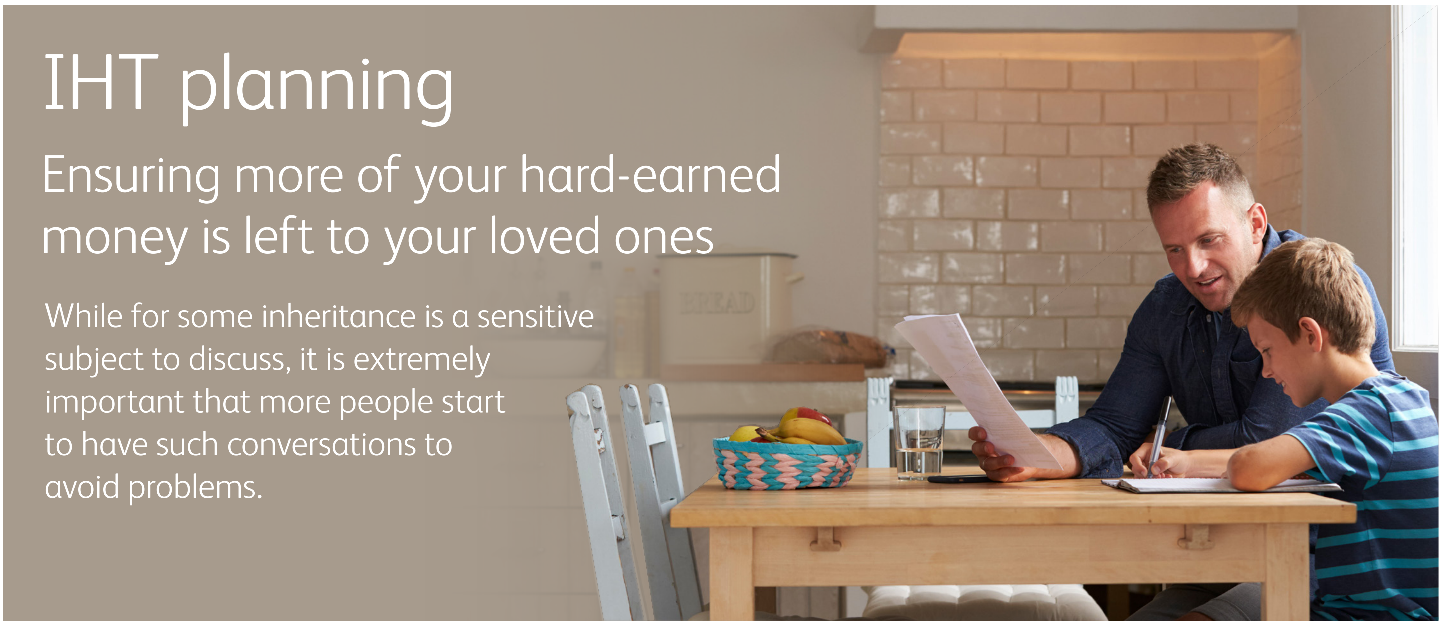
For further information and support please visit:
legalandgeneral.com/cost-of-living/insurance/cost-of-living-life-insurance/

Author: Richard Baker, Legal & General Protection

IHT planning

Ensuring more of your hard-earned money is left to your loved ones

While for some inheritance is a sensitive subject to discuss, it is extremely important that more people start to have such conversations to avoid problems.



Our research* shows that just one in five people in the affluent baby boomer demographic (born 1946-1964) have received financial advice on inheritance planning, despite 85% of them saying they believe passing wealth to loved ones is important.

There is a real risk that many people will miss the opportunity to mitigate Inheritance Tax (IHT) by putting off these all-important conversations. IHT was once viewed as a tax on wealthier individuals, but the reality is that runaway house prices have meant that more people will now be caught.

The inheritance tax allowance - or nil rate band - has been frozen since 2009. Conversely, house prices have rocketed. Office for Budget Responsibility projections reveal this process of freezing allowances is pulling more owners of modest homes into the IHT net, eventually boosting government coffers by £8.3bn by 2026/27, a 63% increase in IHT revenues from 2019/20.

The starting point for inheritance planning is having an up to date will in place. Where no will is in place, an estate is distributed in line with Intestacy rules and the person is known to have died intestate.

Where someone dies intestate, their estate is usually administered by the next of kin. The administrator is unable to divide the estate up as the deceased wished, they must instead follow intestacy rules. These rules provide protection only to those married or in a civil partnership and guarantees that the remaining partner receives all of the deceased's personal items and their estate up to the value of £270,000 (plus half the excess over £270,000) if they had children or grandchildren, or the full estate if they did not. Without a will, cohabitees risk not automatically inheriting anything on the death of their partner unless they jointly own property.

The value of your investments may fall as well as rise and you may not get back what you put in.

This document is based on Quilter's interpretation of the law and HM Revenue and Customs practice as at October 2022. We believe this interpretation is correct, but cannot guarantee it. Tax relief and the tax treatment of investment funds may change.

The value of any tax relief will depend on the investor's individual circumstances.

Author: Rachael Griffin, Quilter.

Here are three ways you could lower your IHT bill:

1. Make full use of your nil-rate band and residence nil rate band

This tax year, you can pass on up to £175,000 of your property tax-free (except for estates in excess of £2 million), which is effectively doubled to £350,000 when combined with the allowance of your spouse or civil partner. That's layered on top of your nil rate band of £325,000, meaning it is possible to pass on £1m inheritance free as a couple. However, the residence nil rate band (RNRB) only works for those with direct descendants to inherit the family home and is capped at the value of the property being inherited (less any mortgage outstanding). It is important to note that the UK's six million cohabitees are less fortunate and cannot claim the combined allowances.

2. Make a small gift

Gifts to spouses or civil partners are completely free of IHT. Each tax year you can also give away up to £3,000 worth of gifts to anyone using your annual gift exemption. As a couple you could therefore gift £6,000 a year. In addition, there is no limit on excess income - above expenditure - that can be gifted.

3. Consider a larger transfer

If appropriate, you could also consider more significant gifts to loved ones during your lifetime. These larger gifts take seven years to see the IHT benefit though so need advanced planning. As well as reducing the taxable estate value, gifting is particularly useful for estates (above £2million) impacted by the RNRB taper as the gifts can immediately reclaim the extra band.

* *Research conducted by Quilter via a self-service survey platform. Total sample size was 826 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken online between 31st January – 1 February 2022. The figures have been weighted and are representative of affluent UK adults in the Baby Boomer demographic cohort – those aged between 58 and 75 with a total of £250,000 or more in household wealth including £50,000 or more in pensions or investments.*

Equity Down, Cash Up

The overall direction of travel is that available savings rates are increasing and in contrast to the downturn in the equity markets moving cash deposits into attractive saving products has dramatically increased.

In the last four months alone Insignis Cash Solutions has seen an almost 140% increase in illustration requests from Financial Advisers on the previous 3 months and an 80% increase in new Clients signing up to use the platform in the same period.

The industry now more than ever is looking to capitalising on the increasing returns available on cash deposits, "falling markets are, perhaps paradoxically, good for savers" industry expert, Don Ezra commented recently in the Financial Times.

How do we ensure we are maximising our savings and minimising our risk without the hassle of constantly monitoring rates and moving our cash savings across accounts?

Insignis Cash Solutions tackles this very question by allowing you to manage your cash savings in an easy and efficient manner. Savers have access to products from 38 Banks and Building Societies under a single sign-up process via the Insignis Cash Platform, thus removing the administrative burden associated with opening, managing, and closing multiple savings accounts. Clients can view and manage their deposits all on the Insignis Cash Platform, taking away the need to sign into multiple banking interfaces to access funds.

The 38 financial institutions Insignis Cash Solutions partners with range from High Street banks & building societies, which are well known to clients, to challenger vanks which are usually less well-known but may offer market-leading rates. In addition, Insignis Cash Solutions often have access to exclusive rates that cannot be obtained directly through the Bank, supporting the Client to ensure their cash works harder for them.

All the UK-based institutions which Insignis works with are authorised by the PRA and regulated by the FCA and therefore offer protection under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). This government-backed scheme provides protection for eligible deposits up to £85,000 per depositor, per institution. This enables Clients to spread their cash across various Banks or Building Societies within the Insignis Cash Solutions service while maximising FSCS protection eligibility.

With over 2,600 savings products on the platform, across multiple Client types, the solution allows Clients to manage their funds based on their liquidity requirements, aiding financial planning as funds can be spread across savings products ranging from easy access to five years. All deposits are held with the chosen Bank and Clients always maintain the beneficial ownership of the funds.

Insignis Cash Solutions serves individuals, businesses, charities, trusts, power of attorney, court of protection, pensions (both SIPP and SSAS) as well as many other Client types. Furthermore, they offer savings rates for Pound Sterling, US Dollar, and Euro cash deposits.

Recently, a Client utilised the Insignis Cash Solutions service for a £750,000 deposit. The funds were being held in in their current account at a high-street Bank earning 0.10%. The Client was concerned about the lack of protection should the institution fail and wanted a solution without having to open multiple accounts. When the Client moved their funds over to the Insignis Cash Platform, they were able to view all partner Banks and Building Societies and their associated savings rates, making it easy to compare and find the best rate. The Client was able to ensure all the funds were eligible for FSCS protection, whilst maximising their savings rates with the blended interest rate rising to over 4%, equating to £26,000 of net annual interest.

The Insignis Cash Solutions service allowed the Client to increase their return and reduce risk, something very few asset classes or services can provide.

Author: Geoff Hutson, CEO,
Insignis Cash Solutions

Giles Hutson established Insignis in 2015 as CEO after a 20-year career in Investment Banking. Previously he was a Managing Director at Merrill Lynch and Morgan Stanley and has held previous roles at Goldman Sachs and Barclays. He has been responsible for running many financing, payment and risk management transactions across all asset classes.

Savings Products	Top Rates November 2022
Easy Access	2.60%
35 Days Notice	2.55%
45 Days Notice	2.90%
95 Days Notice	3.20%
6 Month Fixed Term	3.80%
9 Month Fixed Term	3.87%
1 Year Fixed Term	4.50%

Rates are correct as of 21/10/22. Rates specific to individual Hub Account and some products are subject to minimum deposit size. More Client types and accounts available on the Insignis Platform

Lower pension savings, higher unsecured debt – how consumers are reacting to the cost of living crisis

This quarter's Wealth and Wellbeing Monitor report vividly illustrates the ongoing impact of the cost of living crisis.

49% of UK Adults are worried about the rising prices of day-to-day items, 30% confirmed they are saving less, and our current finances index has continued to worsen, as has the future outlook index. Both indices are worse than any period during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Consumers are taking many different measures to combat rising daily costs but, perhaps most significantly for our sector, over a million workers are paying less into their pension. The long term impact of this won't be felt until these consumers near retirement and find they don't have sufficient savings to fund the lifestyle they'd wanted.

Mass affluent worry about the effect of stock market volatility on their pension

1 in 5 UK adults are worried about their savings being devalued by low interest rates and increasing inflation. This is a particular concern for the mass affluent (those with assets of between £100,000 and £500,000 excluding property) of whom 30% are worried about this. *(see Figure 1)*

The mass affluent are also twice as worried (compared to UK Adults as a whole) about how unexpected stock market drops could affect the value of their pension(s) (19% vs. 9% of UK adults).

Nearly half of retirees retired earlier than planned

In this quarter's survey we revealed not only that people are paying less into their pensions, but that many people in fact retired before they were financially ready. We found that 47% of retirees retired earlier than planned. Men were more likely than women to have retired at least 5 years earlier than planned. *(see Figure 2)*

Across the plethora of issues that the current crisis raises; be that rising prices in the supermarkets, higher interest rates, or even retiring before you're ready, what consumers could benefit from is consistency.

A smoother investment journey

Smoothed funds could provide a solution for clients in these turbulent times by providing an investment journey without the peaks and troughs of standard stock market investment. Our smoothing mechanism has proved its self over the last 15 years, including the events of 2008 and 2020.

Clients in decumulation could reduce sequence of returns risk as they take an income and create longevity of income requirements that many unsmoothed solutions may not offer. This is of particular importance if the client has retired earlier than initially planned.

To find out more about LV= Smoothed Managed Funds, visit lvadviser.com/smoothed-investments and watch our video which explains our modern and transparent smoothing mechanism.

Source of statistics unless otherwise stated: LV= Wealth and Wellbeing Monitor, 9th Edition, August 2022.

Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future returns. Smoothing can be suspended at our discretion. This may be in exceptional conditions or if the underlying price was 80% or less of the averaged price. If smoothing was suspended the funds may need to be valued using the underlying price. We also have discretion to use a daily gradual averaged price with an appropriate smoothing period of up to 26 weeks. Full details are contained in the document 'Your guide to how we manage our unitised with-profits Smoothed Managed Funds business' which can be downloaded from lvadviser.com

Author: Jon Grundy, LV Partnership Development Manager

Figure 2: Was the age that you retired different to the age you had originally planned to retire?

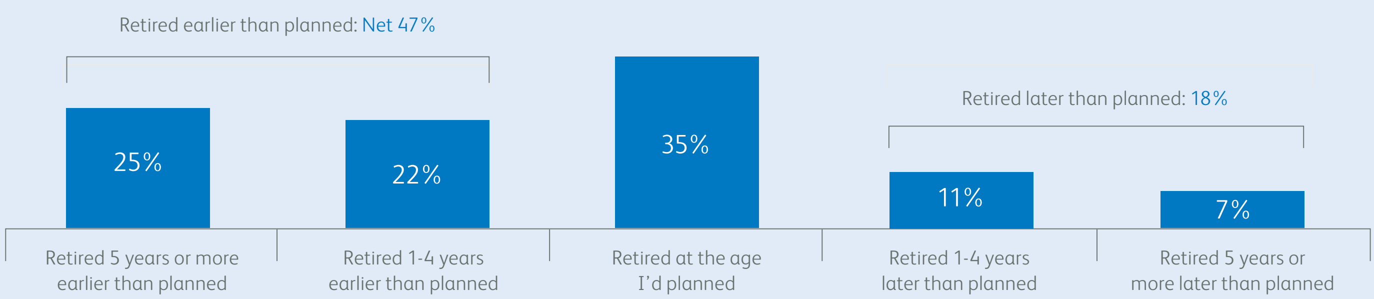
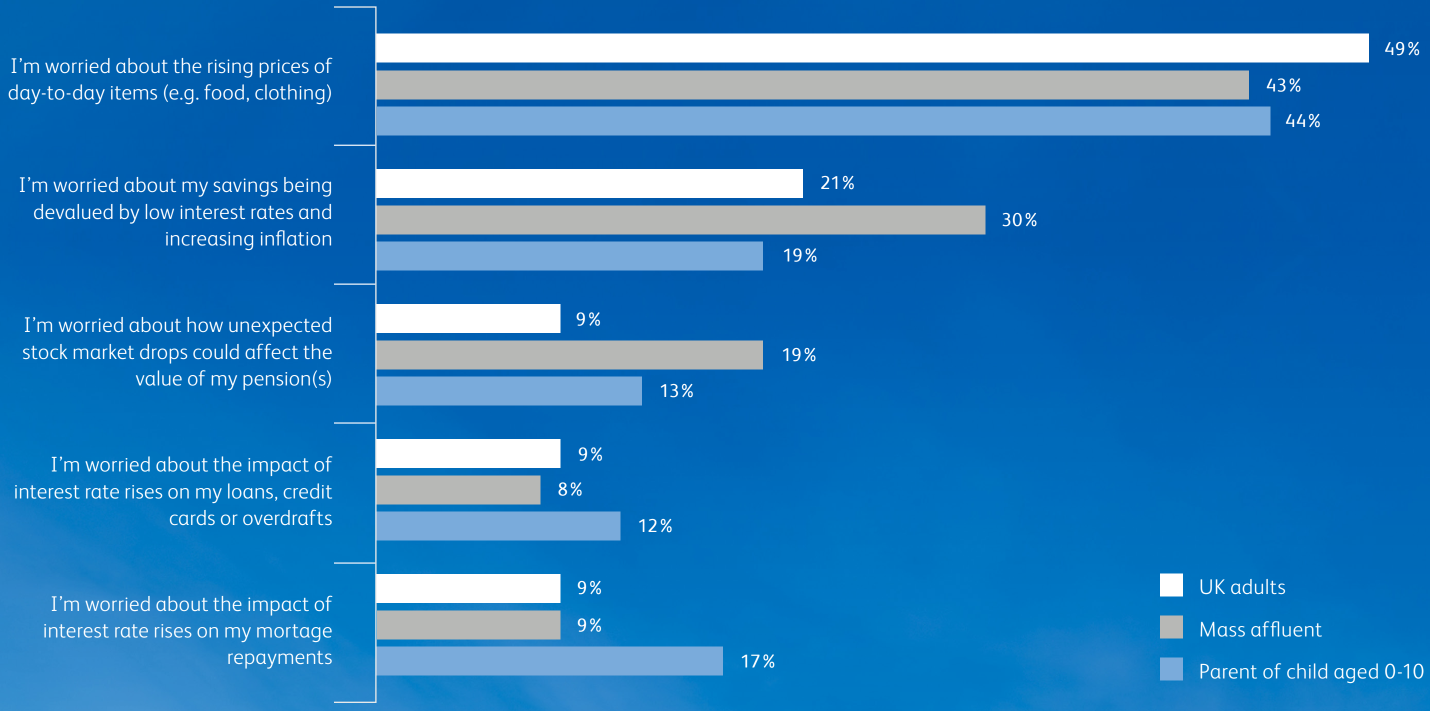
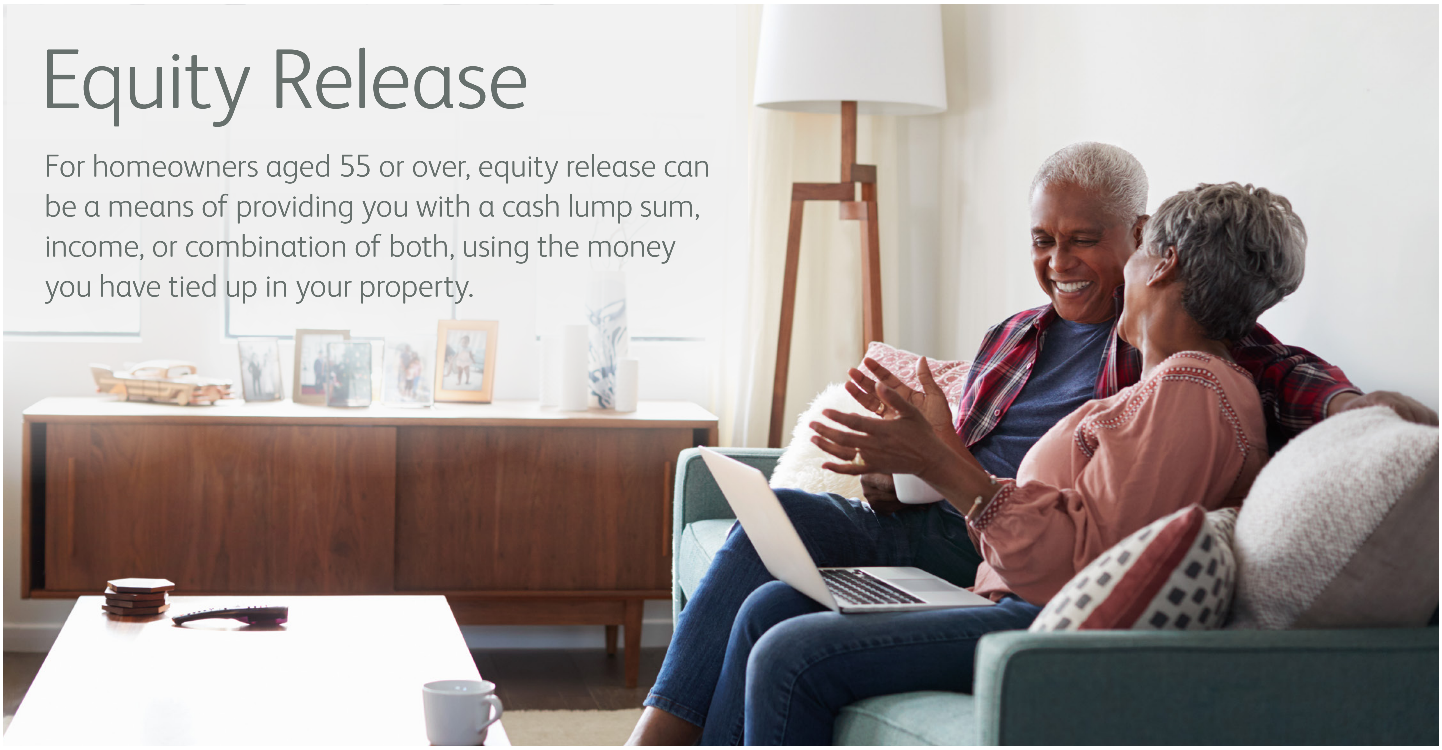


Figure 1: Which of the following statements would you say represent your current anxieties/worries?



Equity Release

For homeowners aged 55 or over, equity release can be a means of providing you with a cash lump sum, income, or combination of both, using the money you have tied up in your property.



There are two main types of equity release product: lifetime mortgages, which are mortgages that are secured against your home; and home reversion plans, where you sell all or part of your property to a reversion company in exchange for money. The majority of equity release products sold in the UK today are lifetime mortgages.

At Just, we offer lump sum and drawdown lifetime mortgages. And whilst these types of lifetime mortgage can be useful, they definitely aren't right for everyone. That's why we've compiled the following information to help you find out more.

What is equity release?

Equity release lets you access some of the money that's tied up in your home. It can give you a tax-free lump sum that you can spend on numerous different things such as easing money worries, a holiday of a lifetime, a kitchen, funding care at home, improvements or alterations to your home – almost anything at all.

Am I eligible for equity release?

Different equity release providers have different criteria they apply when assessing if a customer can take out equity release – however, in the main, you may be eligible for equity release if:

- You are a homeowner in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland
- Your property is worth £70,000 or more
- You are aged 55 and over

All equity release products reduce the amount you leave behind in your estate when you die, they could affect your entitlement to state benefits and they could also affect your tax position.

We recommend that you talk to your 2Plan professional adviser before making any decisions about buying equity release products.

Author: Just

Is equity release right for you?

Equity release isn't right for everyone. It depends on your circumstances, and there may be other products or courses of action that make more sense. Here are some things to think about:

- Could you downsize?
  You could sell your property and downsize to a smaller, cheaper one. It may be a difficult decision emotionally, but it could be very practical.
- Could you get a 'standard' mortgage?
  Your age and income would probably be the deciding factors, and of course it's important to think carefully before securing debts against your home. Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage.
- Could you get a local authority grant?
  If you're thinking about equity release for home repairs or heating improvements, then it's worth checking to see if your local authority offers grants or loans.
- Could you simply borrow money from elsewhere?
  It may not be easy, but could you ask a relative or close friend to lend you the money?
- Could you rent a room out?
  If a small, regular income would do the trick, then you could earn up to £7,500 per annum free of tax through the Rent a Room Scheme.

And of course, it's important to make sure you're getting all the income and benefits you're entitled to as well.

Download 2connect from the App Store to keep up to date with the latest marketing material from 2plan wealth management. Our whole library of marketing material is available for you to view, when you want, keeping up with the latest news.

If you would like to discuss any of these topics in more detail, please feel free to contact me to make an appointment. If you have friends, family members or colleagues who you think would be interested in these topics, please pass this newsletter to them.

Help For Wealth

safety in numbers
2plan.com

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