CLARITY
WEALTH SERVICES

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# Could changes to the triple lock affect your retirement from 2030?

Discover how to prepare for uncertainty and build confidence in your future



### Give more than a gift this Christmas

Making generosity part of your legacy to benefit future generations

### Your essential 2026/27 tax year checklist

Keep more of your wealth and work towards the goals that matter most

### 2027 pension tax changes and your legacy

Protect the wealth you've built and help secure your loved ones' financial future

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# Inside this issue

Welcome to this issue. Could changes to the State Pension triple lock affect your retirement from 2030? With a possible move to a double lock under discussion, review your State Pension forecast, savings and living costs to help you prepare for uncertainty and plan with confidence. At the time of writing, the Chancellor had not yet delivered the Autumn Budget 2026. On page 12, this article reflects information available beforehand and excludes any subsequent measures affecting the triple lock, State Pension increases or retirement planning.

As Christmas approaches, consider a gift that could make a lasting difference: securing your loved ones' financial future. Thoughtful estate planning can help you share your wealth, support family milestones and potentially reduce Inheritance Tax liabilities. Turn to page 11 to discover how gifting allowances, exemptions and careful planning can help protect your assets and preserve your financial security. Turn festive generosity into a meaningful legacy, creating opportunities for loved ones today and for generations to come.

With the 2026/27 tax year drawing to a close, now is the time to review your finances and make the most of available tax allowances. From checking your ISA and pension contributions to reviewing investments, taxable income and estate plans, small steps can make a meaningful difference. On page 07, read our six-point checklist, which highlights key areas to consider, helping you identify opportunities, manage potential tax liabilities and ensure your financial arrangements remain aligned with your goals and long-term priorities.

From 6 April 2027, changes to Inheritance Tax rules could mean that unused pension savings form part of your taxable estate, potentially increasing the tax burden on loved ones. Discover on page 06 how these changes could affect your retirement income strategy, the wealth you leave behind and your family's financial future. Reviewing your pension withdrawals, beneficiary nominations and estate planning arrangements now could help you understand your options and make informed decisions to protect your legacy.

A complete list of the articles featured in this issue appears opposite. ♦

### Looking ahead to a brighter financial future

As we approach the end of 2026, we wish you and your loved ones a happy festive season and a healthy New Year. As you look ahead to 2027, if you would like to review your plans or discuss your financial goals, please get in touch.

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**The value of investments may go down as well as up, and you may get back less than you invested.**

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# Beyond your working years, make your wealth work for you

## Whether travelling more, enjoying family time or gaining financial freedom

**After years of building a successful career and accumulating wealth,** retirement offers the chance to enjoy the rewards of your hard work. Whether your plans involve travelling the world, buying a second home, pursuing new interests or spending more time with family, achieving the lifestyle you want requires careful financial planning. Even substantial wealth needs to be managed strategically to ensure long-term security, flexibility and peace of mind.

**For affluent individuals**, retirement planning is about more than having enough money to stop working. It means aligning your wealth with your ambitions, managing financial risks, and deciding how best to support the next generation, while ensuring you retain the freedom to adapt your plans as life changes.

### Define your retirement ambitions

Start by picturing what retirement looks like for you. Perhaps you want to buy a second home, travel extensively, take up charitable work or help your children onto the property ladder. Establishing your priorities will help determine how much income you need, which assets you may wish to draw on and how your wealth should be structured to support your goals.

It is also important to recognise that spending patterns can change over time. The early years may involve significant travel and leisure spending, while later life could bring higher healthcare or care costs. Building these possibilities into your plans, alongside an allowance for unexpected expenses, can help you maintain your desired lifestyle without compromising your long-term financial security.

### Make your wealth work harder

A comprehensive cashflow forecast can help determine whether your pensions, investments, savings and property income can support your desired lifestyle throughout retirement. By modelling different scenarios, you can assess the potential impact of inflation, market volatility, unexpected expenses and a retirement lasting 30 years or more. This can also help identify when adjustments to spending or investment strategy might be necessary.

Tax efficiency is another key consideration. Reviewing how you draw income from pensions, Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs) and other investments can help you make better use of available allowances and manage your overall tax liability. The order in which you access different assets can affect your finances over time. As tax rules and personal circumstances can change, professional advice can help ensure your strategy remains appropriate.

### Protect your financial independence

Significant wealth does not eliminate investment risk. A market downturn early in retirement can be particularly damaging if you need to sell investments to cover everyday spending, potentially reducing the amount available to benefit from a future recovery. Maintaining an appropriate cash reserve, diversifying your portfolio and aligning investments with your time horizon may help manage these risks.

Longevity also deserves attention. Planning for a longer retirement, rising living costs and potential care needs can help preserve your financial independence. Regular reviews are essential to ensure your investment strategy, income plan and wider financial arrangements remain aligned with changing circumstances, market conditions and your evolving priorities. Investments can fall as well as rise in value, and you may get back less than you invest.

### Balance family and legacy

For many wealthy retirees, financial security includes helping loved ones and deciding how wealth should eventually be passed on. Gifts to children or grandchildren can provide meaningful support, whether for education, a first home or future financial independence. However, generosity should be balanced against your own future needs and the importance of retaining sufficient assets for your retirement.

Estate planning, Inheritance Tax considerations and the timing of gifts can all influence how wealth is transferred efficiently. Reviewing your Will, considering how assets are owned and taking advice on potential tax implications can help you establish a clear legacy plan while retaining flexibility for your own needs.

### Take control of your next chapter

Retirement should be a time to enjoy the wealth you have worked hard to build, rather than worry about whether it will last. A tailored financial plan can provide greater clarity, helping you make informed decisions about spending, investing and passing on wealth, while safeguarding your long-term interests.

### What could your retirement look like with the right plan in place?

You've worked hard to build your wealth. Now it's time to make it work for the future you want. Whether you dream of retiring earlier, travelling more or spending precious time with family, a tailored financial plan and cashflow modelling can help you understand what may be possible.

Contact us today to explore your options, make informed decisions and take the next step towards a retirement built around what matters most to you.

This article does not constitute tax, legal or financial advice and should not be relied upon as such. For guidance, seek professional advice. A pension is a long-term investment not normally accessible until age 55 (57 from April 2028, unless the plan has a protected pension age). The value of your investments (and any income from them) can go down as well as up, and you may receive back less than you invest, affecting the level of pension benefits available. Cashflow, estate and tax planning are not regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

# How can you build financial freedom together?

## Taking control of your finances and shaping the future you want



**Imagine building a life with someone you love,** sharing a home, planning holidays and perhaps raising a family. Your finances become intertwined, and you naturally start making decisions together. But what if circumstances changed unexpectedly? Maintaining financial independence within a relationship can provide security, confidence and greater freedom to navigate life's uncertainties.

### Why financial independence matters

Financial independence does not imply a lack of trust or commitment. It means understanding your financial position, having savings in your own name and feeling confident about making informed decisions about your future. When both partners understand their finances, they can build a healthier relationship grounded in openness, mutual respect and shared responsibility.

Life rarely follows a predictable path. Redundancy, illness, bereavement, separation or caring responsibilities can significantly strain household finances. Access to personal funds and a clear understanding of your financial commitments can provide a valuable safety net, helping you make decisions without feeling entirely dependent on your partner.

### Start with honest conversations

Talking about money can feel uncomfortable, especially when partners have different attitudes to spending, saving or borrowing. However, discussing income, debts, financial priorities and long-term ambitions early on can help prevent misunderstandings. Regular conversations also help couples agree how household bills will be shared while ensuring both retain some financial autonomy.

A joint account can be useful for managing mortgage payments, household expenses and family costs, but it need not replace individual accounts. Finding the right balance between shared and personal finances enables couples to work towards common goals while maintaining control of their own money.

### Build a stronger financial foundation

One practical step is to set up an emergency fund in your name. A useful target is three to six months' essential living expenses, held in an accessible savings account. Even modest, regular contributions can build a financial buffer over time.

It is equally important to understand your pension, review your savings and consider longer-term investments where appropriate. If one partner takes a career break or reduces working hours to care for children or relatives, discuss the potential impact on pension contributions and future retirement income. Both partners' financial security should be taken into account.

### Protect your future together

Financial planning goes beyond day-to-day budgeting. Reviewing Wills, life assurance and pension beneficiary nominations can help ensure your arrangements reflect your wishes, particularly after marriage, separation or the arrival of children. Unmarried couples should not assume that cohabitation automatically confers inheritance rights in England and Wales.

Ultimately, financial independence is not about preparing for a relationship to fail; it is about ensuring both partners can engage in the relationship with confidence. By combining open communication, individual financial resilience and shared planning, couples can safeguard their futures and strengthen their partnership. ♦


### Your future matters. Isn't it time to put a plan in place?

The right financial decisions today will help you feel more confident about tomorrow. Whether you're thinking about retirement, protecting the people you love or building greater financial security, we can help you understand your options and plan for what matters most.

Contact us today to take the first step towards your financial goals.

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# 2027 pension tax changes and your legacy

## Protect the wealth you've built and help secure your loved ones' financial future



**After decades of saving for retirement, your pension can provide financial security,** support your desired lifestyle and help you leave a legacy for loved ones. However, changes to Inheritance Tax (IHT) from 6 April 2027 could affect how unused pension savings are treated upon passing them on to beneficiaries.

**Understanding these changes** and reviewing your financial plans can help you make informed decisions on retirement income and wealth preservation.

### Understanding the changes ahead

From 6 April 2027, most unused pension funds and certain pension death benefits will generally form part of an estate's value for IHT purposes. This could increase the tax liability for families whose pension savings sit alongside property, investments and other assets.

IHT is charged at 40% on the taxable value of an estate that exceeds the available allowances. The standard nil rate band is £325,000, with an additional residence nil rate band of up to £175,000 potentially available if qualifying conditions are met. These thresholds are frozen until 5 April 2031.

Transfers to a spouse or registered civil partner are generally exempt, and unused allowances may be transferable in certain circumstances. However, eligibility depends on individual circumstances, and some pension benefits may remain outside the scope of the new rules.

### Rethinking your retirement income

The changes may prompt you to reconsider which assets to use to fund retirement. Previously, some savers prioritised spending cash savings and Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs), leaving pension funds untouched for passing on to beneficiaries.

From 6 April 2027, this approach may not be suitable for everyone. Taking pension withdrawals earlier could reduce the value of your estate, but such withdrawals may incur Income Tax, while money transferred into other assets could remain liable to IHT.

Any decision should balance potential tax savings against investment performance, inflation, life expectancy and the need for sustainable retirement income. Investments can fall as well as rise, so you may receive less than you invest.

### Review your estate planning

Review your pension beneficiary nominations regularly to ensure they reflect your wishes. Although nominations do not necessarily determine IHT treatment, they help pension providers understand your intentions.

It is also worth reviewing your Will, property ownership, investments and potential lifetime gifts. Gifting can support estate planning, but tax rules and time limits may apply. Consider your future care costs, unexpected expenses and long-term financial security before gifting assets.

### Plan ahead with confidence

Reviewing your pension and estate arrangements now can help you understand the potential impact of the changes. Professional financial advice can help you explore strategies that balance your retirement needs with your legacy goals. ♦

### Time to take the next step towards protecting your family's future?

With the 2027 pension Inheritance Tax changes approaching, now is the time to protect your legacy. Contact us to understand how the new rules could affect your pension, estate and the wealth you hope to pass on, and to create a tailored plan for greater peace of mind and your family's future.

Please get in touch today to arrange a review and take a proactive step to safeguard your financial future and your family's inheritance. We look forward to hearing from you.

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# One in three parents 'too busy' to plan for their future finances

## Putting your children first shouldn't mean putting your future last

**Between school runs, work deadlines, household bills and family commitments,** retirement planning can easily slip down the priority list. For many parents, supporting their children comes first, leaving little time or money for their long-term financial security.

**Recent research found that 31% of parents** with children under 18 feel too busy to plan for their financial future[1]. Although retirement may seem distant, taking action now can help you understand your options and prepare for the years ahead.

### When family life takes priority

Looking after children was the biggest competing demand for parents who struggled to plan their finances, cited by 66% of respondents. This figure rose to 76% for mothers, compared with 54% for fathers.

The findings also revealed differences in retirement planning between men and women. Among parents with children under 18, 43% of women said they had not planned how much they would need in retirement, compared with 22% of men.

With childcare costs and everyday expenses demanding attention, planning decades ahead can feel overwhelming. However, delaying decisions could leave you with fewer options later in life.

### Cost of putting plans off

The research found that 63% of people who had not yet retired were worried they were not saving enough, while 35% had not considered how much money they might need.

Without a clear understanding of your future expenses and expected income, it can be difficult to know whether your pension savings will support your desired lifestyle. Starting early gives you more time to identify shortfalls and adjust your plans.

### Small steps can make a difference

Retirement planning need not be complicated. Start by reviewing your workplace pension, checking your contributions and understanding how much your employer contributes. If you have changed jobs, locate any pensions from previous employers and assess how they fit into your overall plans.

Where affordable, consider increasing contributions and maximising the value of available employer contributions. An annual financial review can help you track progress and adapt as your circumstances change.

Your plan should also reflect your current commitments, including housing, childcare and household bills. Focus on realistic steps that balance today's needs with tomorrow's goals.

### Make time for your future

Securing your financial future is an important part of planning for family life. Reviewing your pension and seeking professional financial advice where appropriate can help you build confidence and work towards a more comfortable retirement. ♦

### Ready to take control of your financial future?

Taking time to plan today will help you look forward to tomorrow with greater confidence and peace of mind.

Please contact us to discuss your circumstances, explore your pension options and build a retirement plan tailored to you and your family.

**Source data:**

*[1] Standard Life Retirement Voice 2026. Research conducted by Ipsos in June 2026 among 6,000 UK adults aged 18 to 80 via an online survey, weighted to be representative of the UK population by age, gender and region. Estimated UK impact: Based on an ONS population estimate of 51,893,826 adults aged 18 to 80, the survey finding of 20% equates to approximately 10.4 million people (estimated range: 9.9 to 10.9 million at 95% confidence).*

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"The research found that 63% of people who had not yet retired were worried they were not saving enough, while 35% had not considered how much money they might need."



# Your essential 2026/27 tax year checklist

## Keep more of your wealth and work towards the goals that matter most

**With the end of the 2026/27 tax year approaching,** there is still time to make considered decisions that could benefit your finances now and in the years ahead. Whether you are saving for your first home, building a retirement fund, growing your investments or hoping to pass wealth on to your family, understanding the allowances and tax rules available to you can help you make better-informed choices.

**Tax planning** is not simply about reducing your bill at the end of the year. It is about making the most of available opportunities, ensuring your money works towards your priorities and avoiding missed opportunities. From reviewing your ISA and pension contributions to checking your investment income and wider financial arrangements, this checklist highlights six areas to consider during the 2026/27 tax year, which runs from 6 April 2026 to 5 April 2027.

### Make the most of your allowances

#### 1. Give your Individual Savings Account (ISA) a health check

ISAs offer a valuable way to save and invest without paying UK tax on eligible interest, investment income or capital gains within the account. For 2026/27, the annual ISA allowance is £20,000 and the Junior ISA allowance is £9,000.

Consider whether a Cash ISA, a Stocks & Shares ISA or a combination of both is appropriate for your goals, investment timeframe and attitude to risk. Cash savings may suit money you expect to need in the short term, while investments may be more appropriate for certain longer-term objectives, although their value can fall as well as rise.

Regular contributions can help you build your savings over time. Remember that unused ISA allowance cannot normally be carried forward, so consider how much of your allowance to use before the tax year ends.

Looking ahead, the rules are also set to change from 6 April 2027: the annual Cash ISA limit will fall to £12,000 for savers under 65, while the overall ISA allowance will remain at £20,000. If you rely on cash savings, this is worth factoring into your future planning.

#### 2. Give your pension contributions a boost

Your pension can play a central role in funding the retirement you want. Reviewing your contributions regularly can help you assess whether you are making sufficient progress towards your goals and whether there is scope to increase your savings.

The standard annual pension allowance for 2026/27 is £60,000, though lower limits may apply depending on your income and circumstances. Employer contributions count towards this allowance. If you have unused allowance from previous tax years, you may be able to carry it forward, subject to the relevant rules.

Eligible pension contributions can attract tax relief, making pensions a potentially tax-efficient way to save for retirement. However, the amount you can contribute to receive tax relief, and the annual allowance available to you, depend on your circumstances. Personal contributions receive tax relief only if you have sufficient UK relevant earnings, or up to £3,600 gross. Before increasing contributions, consider your immediate financial commitments, access to emergency savings and your retirement objectives. Tax treatment depends on individual circumstances and may change in the future.

### Keep potential tax bills in check

#### 3. Review your investments and taxable income

If you hold investments outside tax-efficient accounts, review any potential capital gains and dividend income. For 2026/27, the annual Capital Gains Tax exemption is £3,000 for most individuals and £1,500 for most other trusts. The annual dividend allowance remains at £500.

Dividend tax rates have increased for some taxpayers from 6 April 2026. For dividend income above the tax-free allowance, the ordinary rate is now 10.75%, the upper rate is 35.75% and the additional rate remains at 39.35%.

If you are considering selling investments, realising gains or changing your portfolio, consider the potential tax implications alongside your broader investment objectives. Avoid making investment decisions based solely on tax savings, as the suitability of an investment and its potential risks should remain central to your decision-making.

#### 4. Check your tax code and income

Your Personal Allowance for 2026/27 is £12,570, but it reduces by £1 for every £2 of adjusted net income above £100,000 and can fall to zero.

Check your tax code and payslips, especially if you have changed jobs, received a pay rise or started earning income from property, savings, investments or self-employment. Multiple income sources can affect your overall tax position, so it is important to understand how they interact.

If you complete a Self Assessment tax return, keep relevant receipts, statements and records organised throughout the year. This can make the process easier and help you identify potential liabilities or reporting obligations in good time.

### Protect your financial future

#### 5. Review your wider financial and estate plans

Tax planning should sit alongside your broader financial arrangements. Consider whether your Will reflects your current wishes, whether your pension beneficiary nominations remain appropriate and whether you have made suitable arrangements to protect your interests if you are unable to make decisions for yourself.



In England and Wales, a Lasting Power of Attorney allows you to appoint trusted people to make decisions about your property and financial affairs, or your health and welfare, within the limits set by law. It must be established while you have the necessary mental capacity. Different arrangements apply in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

It is also worth considering how your wealth may pass to your family and whether your estate plans remain appropriate. Significant changes in your circumstances or in the tax rules may warrant a review, particularly if you have property, business interests or substantial investments.

### 6. Turn your checklist into action

The most effective tax planning decisions are those that align with your broader financial goals. Identify the areas that need attention, determine which actions are realistic and set reminders to review your progress before the end of the tax year.

You may want to increase pension contributions, utilise your ISA allowance, review your taxable investments or seek our professional guidance on a significant financial decision. The right priorities will depend on your income, assets, family circumstances and long-term ambitions.

Rather than waiting until next April, make reviewing your finances an ongoing habit. Keeping your plans under review helps you respond to changes in your circumstances and make more informed decisions as opportunities arise.

### Make your money work towards what matters most

Making the most of your tax allowances is not just about the figures on a statement. It is about helping your savings, investments and pensions support the future you want, whether that means enjoying a comfortable retirement, providing for your family or building lasting financial security.

Taking time to review your arrangements for the 2026/27 tax year will help you identify opportunities, understand potential liabilities and set a clearer course for your financial plans. Making the right financial decisions today will help you build greater security for tomorrow. ♦

### Are you making the most of the opportunities available to you this tax year?

Whether you want to strengthen your savings, review your pension, make informed investment decisions or plan for your family's future, we can help you assess your circumstances and explore your options.

Contact us today to discuss your financial plans and discover how a tailored approach could help you make the most of the 2026/27 tax year while keeping your long-term goals on track.

“In England and Wales, a Lasting Power of Attorney allows you to appoint trusted people to make decisions about your property and financial affairs, or your health and welfare, within the limits set by law. It must be established while you have the necessary mental capacity.”

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# Are your finances as secure as you think in your 50s?

## With retirement on the horizon, preparing for the next stage of life is essential

**Your 50s can be a defining decade for your finances.** After years of working, saving and meeting family commitments, you may be approaching your peak earning years, with retirement becoming a more immediate consideration.

**Whether you dream of travelling,** spending time with loved ones or enjoying greater freedom, reviewing your finances now can help you prepare for the future.

### Preparing for retirement

### Is your retirement plan on track?

Estimate the income you will need to support your desired lifestyle, including essential expenses, travel and hobbies. Consider your ideal retirement age and whether a gradual transition from work might suit you. Inflation can erode purchasing power, so reviewing different retirement dates and income scenarios can help identify potential shortfalls.

### Are you making the most of your savings?

Consider increasing pension contributions, using your Individual Savings Account (ISA) allowance or directing surplus income towards longer-term goals. Review how your money is allocated across cash, pensions and investments, ensuring your approach reflects your financial commitments, timescales and attitude to risk.

### Protecting your wealth

### Will your money provide a sustainable income?

Your retirement income may come from workplace and personal pensions, ISAs, investments, property and the State Pension. Understanding how these sources work together, when funds can be accessed and how withdrawals affect your tax position can help you make informed decisions.

If you have several pension pots, review their charges, benefits and investment arrangements before considering consolidation. Some pensions offer valuable guarantees or protected benefits that may be lost on transfer.

Balance investment risk carefully. Excessive risk can expose you to market falls, while overly cautious investing may leave your wealth vulnerable to inflation. Investments can fall as well as rise, and you may get back less than you invested.

### Are your debts and savings balanced?

Review your mortgage, outstanding borrowing and accessible savings. Supporting family members can be rewarding, but ensure that any financial gifts do not compromise your retirement security. An emergency fund can also help cover unexpected expenses without requiring untimely investment sales.

### Planning for the unexpected

### Have you protected your family and legacy?

Check that your Will reflects your wishes, review your pension beneficiary nominations and consider Lasting Powers of Attorney. Assess potential Inheritance Tax liabilities and explore estate-planning options, taking professional advice where appropriate.

Ill health, bereavement, changes in employment and future care costs can also affect your plans. Reviewing suitable protection arrangements can help strengthen your financial resilience.

### Take charge of the years ahead

Your 50s offer an opportunity to turn years of hard work into a practical retirement plan. We can help identify potential shortfalls, explore suitable options and set clear priorities tailored to your circumstances, giving you greater confidence as you prepare for the next chapter. ♦

### Is your financial future ready for the next chapter?

You have spent years building your wealth. Now is the time to ensure it supports the retirement you want and the people who matter most. Speak to us about your financial planning and wealth management needs.

Take the next step towards greater financial confidence and a future built around what matters most to you.

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# Give more than a gift this Christmas

## Making generosity part of your legacy to benefit future generations



**As Christmas approaches, we turn our attention to family, friends and thoughtful ways to show we care.** Beyond festive celebrations, this season of generosity offers an opportunity to consider a gift that could make a lasting difference: securing your loved ones' financial future.

With careful estate planning, you can share the wealth you have worked hard to build, support family milestones and potentially reduce your Inheritance Tax (IHT) liability, all while protecting your financial security.

### Make generosity part of your legacy

Whether you want to help children buy their first home, contribute towards a grandchild's education or support a family wedding, giving during your lifetime allows you to see the benefits of your generosity.

Gifts to individuals are generally treated as potentially exempt transfers for IHT purposes. If you survive seven years after making a gift, it will normally fall outside your estate. If you die sooner, some or all of its value may remain relevant for IHT calculations, depending on the circumstances and available exemptions.

Before making substantial gifts, consider your future living costs, retirement plans and potential care needs to ensure you retain sufficient funds.

### Understand the available exemptions

Several exemptions may help you give tax-efficiently. The annual exemption allows most people to give away £3,000 each tax year without incurring IHT. Any unused allowance can generally be carried forward for one year.

You may also give up to £250 per recipient each tax year under the small-gifts exemption, subject to conditions. Separate allowances apply to qualifying wedding or civil partnership gifts, depending on your relationship to the recipient.

Regular gifts from surplus income may also be exempt if they come from income rather than capital, form part of a regular pattern and leave you able to maintain your usual standard of living. Keeping accurate records will help establish whether these conditions are met.

### Protect the wealth you leave behind

For 2026/27, the standard IHT nil rate band is £325,000. An additional residence nil rate band of up to £175,000 may apply if a qualifying home passes to direct descendants. Eligible married couples and registered civil partners may transfer unused allowances, potentially allowing up to £1 million to pass free of IHT, subject to conditions. Thresholds are frozen until April 2031.

Reviewing your Will, asset ownership and wider estate plan can help ensure your wishes are carried out.

### Give with confidence

Professional financial advice will help you understand exemptions, assess potential liabilities and develop a plan that balances generosity with your long-term financial security.

This Christmas, consider a gift that lasts beyond the festive season: a thoughtful legacy for generations to come. ♦

### Looking to give your loved ones the gift of a brighter financial future?

The wealth you have worked hard to build could help shape the lives of those who matter most. Whether you want to support your family today or protect the legacy you leave for the future, thoughtful financial planning can help you make every decision count.

Please speak to us about your estate planning options and how to pass on your wealth this Christmas and beyond.

This article does not constitute tax, legal or financial advice and should not be relied upon as such. Estate, tax planning and will writing are not regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. For guidance, seek professional advice.

# Could changes to the triple lock affect your retirement from 2030?

## Discover how to prepare for uncertainty and build confidence in your future

**Picture yourself reaching retirement after decades of hard work,** saving and planning for the future. Perhaps you're looking forward to travelling more, spending time with family or simply enjoying the freedom to do what you love. Whatever retirement means to you, a reliable income will make a significant difference to the lifestyle you can enjoy.

**For many people**, the State Pension will be an important part of their income. However, the amount you receive over the course of retirement depends not only on your entitlement but also on how the pension increases over time.

With the future of the triple lock under discussion and a possible move to a double lock from 2030, it's worth considering what this could mean for your plans. Although no change is guaranteed, understanding the potential implications now could help you prepare for different outcomes and feel more confident about your financial future.

At the time of writing, the Chancellor had not yet delivered the Autumn Budget 2026. This article is based on information available before the Budget announcement and does not reflect any subsequent measures that may affect the triple lock, State Pension increases or the wider retirement planning landscape.

### Why the triple lock matters

The triple lock increases the UK State Pension each April by whichever is highest: average earnings growth, inflation measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) or 2.5%. Introduced to protect pensioners' incomes, it aims to ensure the State Pension keeps pace with rising wages or prices, providing a degree of certainty in retirement planning.

However, as the UK population ages and more people draw their pensions for longer, the policy has prompted debate about its long-term affordability. A move to a double lock, which would remove the 2.5% minimum increase, could be considered from 2030, though any change would depend on future government decisions.

For those approaching retirement, even a small difference in annual increases can have a cumulative effect on income over time. This makes it important to consider how your retirement finances might be affected, rather than assuming that today's arrangements will remain unchanged throughout your retirement.

### Build a flexible retirement plan

The State Pension provides a valuable foundation, but relying on it as your primary source of retirement income could leave you vulnerable to future policy changes or rising living costs. Reviewing your expected income and existing savings can help you determine whether further planning is needed.

Start by checking your State Pension forecast through the government's online service. This will help you understand how much you could receive and when you can claim it. Reviewing your National Insurance record is also worthwhile, as gaps may affect your entitlement. Before making voluntary contributions to fill any gaps, check whether doing so would actually increase your pension.

Next, review your workplace and personal pensions, along with any savings and investments you hold. If affordable, increasing your pension contributions can help build your retirement fund over time. Starting early gives your money more time to benefit from potential investment growth and applicable tax relief, although investment returns are not guaranteed and the value of investments can fall as well as rise. Tax treatment depends on individual circumstances and may change in the future.

If retirement is approaching, consider whether your current savings are likely to support your desired lifestyle. Depending on your circumstances, you may have options to adjust your contributions, retirement date or future spending plans.

### Give yourself financial flexibility

Understanding how much money you may need in retirement is just as important as knowing how much you could receive. Start by estimating your essential costs, including housing, energy, food and transport, then allow for discretionary spending on holidays, hobbies and other activities you hope to enjoy.

It is also worth looking beyond your immediate needs. Inflation can gradually erode the purchasing power of your income, while unexpected expenses, such as home maintenance or potential care costs, may put



additional pressure on your finances later in life. Building flexibility into your plans can help you prepare for these eventualities.

Consider how your State Pension could complement workplace or personal pensions and accessible savings. Maintaining an appropriate emergency reserve may reduce the need to draw on investments during a market downturn. Diversifying investments across asset classes and geographical markets can also help spread risk, though it cannot eliminate losses.

The right balance will depend on your circumstances, retirement goals, investment time horizon and attitude to risk. Someone approaching retirement may have different priorities from someone with another 20 years to save. Reviewing your options regularly can help ensure your approach remains suitable as your needs evolve.

### Take action today

Retirement planning is not a one-off exercise. As your circumstances change and you approach retirement, it is worth revisiting your expected income, pension savings and spending plans. You could also consider how different rates of State Pension increases might affect your finances over the coming years.

Although you cannot control future government decisions, you can take practical steps to strengthen your financial resilience. Understanding your likely pension entitlement, reviewing your savings and assessing whether your contributions are sufficient can help you prepare for a range of possible outcomes.

You do not need to make every decision at once. Even small, consistent steps today could help strengthen your financial position and give you greater confidence in the retirement you hope to enjoy. ♦

### Could your retirement plans withstand a change to the triple lock system?

Planning for retirement can feel complex, especially as pension rules and policies evolve. Speak with us for professional guidance tailored to your circumstances. We'll help you review your retirement plans, understand your options, and consider how potential changes to the triple lock could affect your future income.

Take the next step towards a retirement built around the lifestyle and financial security that matter most to you. We look forward to hearing from you.

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“Consider how your State Pension could complement workplace or personal pensions and accessible savings. Maintaining an appropriate emergency reserve may reduce the need to draw on investments during a market downturn.”

# Plan wisely today. Live confidently tomorrow

## Getting a balance between enjoying your income now and building financial security



**Retirement should be a time to enjoy the rewards of years of saving,** whether that means travelling, spending more time with family or pursuing long-held ambitions. Yet for many, the transition from a regular salary to relying on pensions, savings and investments brings a new set of financial challenges.

**With retirement potentially lasting 30 years** or more, making your money last is just as important as enjoying it. The key is finding the right balance between generating a dependable income to support your lifestyle today and keeping enough invested for future growth. Inflation can gradually erode purchasing power, while market fluctuations and unexpected expenses can put pressure on even a carefully built pension pot.

Taking too little investment risk may limit your savings' growth, but taking too much could expose you to losses at the wrong time. A considered approach can help you navigate these competing priorities and give you greater confidence in your financial future.

### Rethinking retirement risk

Moving into retirement changes the role of your investments. Instead of building a pension pot, you need to make it work for you. Withdrawing too much too soon can strain your finances, particularly if markets fall early in retirement. Equally, holding too much in cash or low-growth assets could leave your savings struggling to keep pace with inflation.

There are several risks to consider: living longer than expected, rising living costs, market volatility and the timing of withdrawals. These factors are closely linked. Avoiding investment risk altogether may feel reassuring, but it can increase the risk of your money running out over time.

### Looking beyond income

It is tempting to rely solely on dividends and interest to fund retirement spending, leaving your original capital untouched. However, this approach can limit your investment choices. A total return strategy considers both the income investments generate and their potential to appreciate, offering greater flexibility in how you fund your lifestyle.

For example, investment income might cover everyday expenses in some years, while selling a portion of investments could help pay for a special holiday or an unexpected bill. Combining different sources of return may also help diversify your portfolio and preserve opportunities for longer-term growth.

### Finding the right balance

A well-structured portfolio can help balance immediate spending needs with future financial security. More stable assets, such as short-term government bonds, may help meet near-term withdrawals, while growth-oriented investments, including shares and corporate bonds, can offer potential for longer-term returns. The appropriate mix depends on your circumstances, time horizon and capacity to absorb losses.

Flexibility is equally important. Regularly reviewing your portfolio and withdrawal strategy can help you respond to changing markets, inflation and personal priorities. Taking too little may mean missing opportunities to enjoy retirement, while taking too much could jeopardise your future security. A sustainable plan should reflect how you want to live, rather than relying on assumptions that never change.

### Planning with confidence

There is no single investment strategy suited to everyone. Your pension arrangements, other savings, essential expenditure and attitude to risk all influence the right approach. Professional financial advice can help you assess your options, understand the trade-offs and create a plan that evolves with your needs.

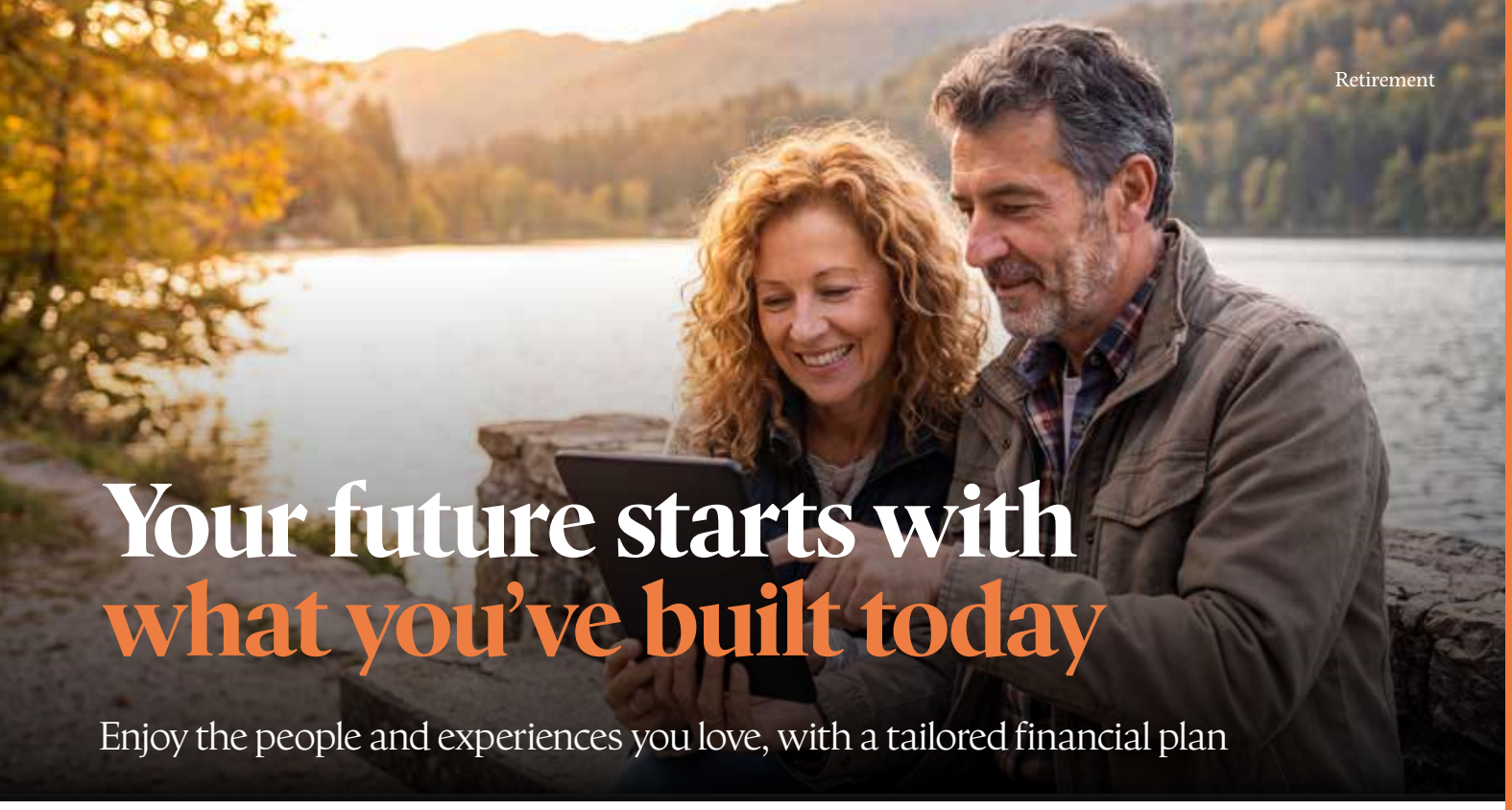
You've spent years building your savings. Now it's time to put them to work for the life you want to enjoy, whether that means travelling more, spending precious time with loved ones or simply enjoying greater peace of mind. ♦

### Ready to discuss making the most of the retirement you've worked so hard for?

We'll explain and explore how, with a tailored investment and financial planning strategy, you can make the most of your retirement savings, balance income and growth, and manage risk as your needs evolve.

Because retirement should be about enjoying the life you've earned, not about worrying about the money behind it. We look forward to hearing from you.

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# Your future starts with what you've built today

Enjoy the people and experiences you love, with a tailored financial plan

**Retirement should be an opportunity to enjoy the rewards of years of hard work,** whether that means travelling, spending more time with family, pursuing long-held ambitions or simply having greater freedom to spend your time as you wish. However, turning these aspirations into a sustainable financial reality requires careful planning.

**With rising living costs**, pension rule changes, tax considerations and uncertainty about how long your savings will need to last, determining whether you have enough to support your desired lifestyle can feel daunting. With our professional financial advice and support, we will help you make sense of your options, understand the risks and develop a clear strategy for the years ahead, giving you greater confidence as you approach this important life transition.

## A realistic picture of your future finances

Retirement planning is about more than calculating the size of your pension pot. It involves understanding how much income you are likely to need, when you want to stop working and how your lifestyle might change over time. Professional financial advice will help you build a realistic picture of your future finances, taking into account your pensions, savings, investments, property and other sources of income.

The earlier you start planning, the more time you have to address potential shortfalls and make informed decisions. However, advice can be valuable at any stage, whether retirement is decades away or just around the corner. Even small adjustments to pension contributions, spending habits or investment choices can make a meaningful difference over the long term.

## Making your money work harder

One of the biggest challenges in retirement is balancing the need for income now with the need to preserve wealth for the future. Taking too much from your pension too soon could leave you financially stretched later in life, while being overly cautious may mean you miss opportunities to enjoy the retirement you have worked hard to achieve.

Professional financial advice will help you assess your options, including whether to take a tax-free lump sum, purchase an annuity or draw income from your pension investments. It also explains how tax, inflation, investment risk and changing market conditions may affect your plans. Personalised cashflow forecasting will illustrate how different decisions could affect your finances over time. Where retirement savings remain invested, their value can fall as well as rise, and you may get back less than you invest.

## Planning for the unexpected

Retirement rarely follows a predictable path. Health concerns, changes in family circumstances, unexpected expenses and longer-than-anticipated lifespans can all affect financial security. A robust plan should account for these possibilities and allow flexibility to adapt as circumstances evolve.

Regular reviews are equally important. Your goals, income requirements and financial circumstances may change, and pension legislation and tax rules can also evolve. Professional financial advice will help you revisit your strategy and make adjustments where appropriate, keeping your retirement plans aligned with your priorities.

## Taking the next step

Retirement advice is not only for the wealthy or those approaching their final day at work; it is a valuable resource for anyone seeking to build a secure financial future.

By understanding your options, making informed financial decisions and planning ahead, you can take greater control of your finances, prepare for life's changes and work towards a retirement that aligns with your personal goals and aspirations. ♦

### Looking to build confidence in your retirement?

If you would like greater clarity about your retirement prospects, a conversation with us will help you identify your options, understand potential risks and develop a plan tailored to your desired retirement.

Please contact us to learn more and take the next step towards a more confident financial future.

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# Look beyond your pension to fund the retirement you dream of

## How to make your money last and maintain your lifestyle throughout this new chapter

**Retirement marks the start of a new chapter,** whether that means travelling more, spending quality time with family, pursuing long-held interests or simply enjoying greater freedom in how you spend your time. After years of working and saving, the focus shifts from building your pension pot to making it work for you.



But turning those savings into a reliable and sustainable income requires careful planning. With several options available, understanding how each works, the benefits it offers and the risks involved can help you make informed decisions, maintain your lifestyle and give your money the best chance of lasting throughout retirement.

### Bring your finances together

Start by reviewing your finances as a whole, rather than focusing solely on your pension pot. Your income may come from the State Pension, workplace and personal pensions, Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs), investments, cash savings or rental income. You may also receive an inheritance or other lump sum in the future.

Consider how much you will need to cover essential costs, such as housing, food and household bills, as well as discretionary spending on holidays and hobbies. Remember that retirement can last 30 years or more, so your plans should account for inflation, unexpected expenses and changing circumstances.

### Choose how to access your pension

One option is to purchase an annuity, which provides a guaranteed income for life or for a specified period, depending on the product. This can offer reassurance that regular payments will continue, although flexibility is generally limited once the annuity is purchased. The income available depends on factors such as your age, health and prevailing annuity rates.

Alternatively, income drawdown lets you keep your pension invested while withdrawing funds as needed. This offers flexibility and the potential for investment growth, but your income is not guaranteed and your fund can fall in value. Withdrawing too much, particularly during periods of poor investment performance, could leave you with insufficient funds later in retirement.

### Make your money work harder

You may also be able to take a tax-free lump sum from your pension, subject to the applicable allowances and your individual circumstances. Most people have a tax-free lump sum allowance of £268,275. They can normally take up to 25% of their pension benefits tax-free, provided this does not exceed their available allowance. Any withdrawals above the available tax-free allowance may be subject to Income Tax.

There is no need to rely on a single approach. Combining a guaranteed income from the State Pension or an annuity with flexible withdrawals from investments can help balance financial security with the freedom to adjust your spending. The right mix will depend on your circumstances, attitude to investment risk and long-term priorities.

### Plan for the years ahead

A retirement cashflow forecast will help you estimate future income and expenditure, test different scenarios and understand how inflation, tax changes or market fluctuations could affect your finances. It's important to review your plans regularly to ensure they continue to reflect your needs. ♦


### Ready to take control of your retirement future?

Your retirement should be about looking forward to the life you want, not about worrying how to fund it. We will help you explore your retirement income options and create a personalised plan that reflects your goals, circumstances and aspirations.

Please contact us to start the conversation today and take a positive step towards greater financial clarity, peace of mind and confidence in the years ahead.


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“Start by reviewing your finances as a whole, rather than focusing solely on your pension pot. Your income may come from the State Pension, workplace and personal pensions, Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs), investments, cash savings or rental income.”

# Turn your financial ambitions into reality with cashflow modelling

Understand your current position and make confident decisions for your future

**Imagine reaching your mid-50s with years of hard work behind you,** a pension and investments in place and exciting possibilities ahead. Perhaps you dream of retiring early, spending more time with your family, helping your children buy their first home or finally buying that holiday property you have always wanted.

**You may have built up substantial savings and assets**, yet still ask an important question: can you afford to make these ambitions a reality without compromising your long-term financial security?

Knowing how much you have today is only part of the picture. Understanding how your money could support you in the years ahead can be far more challenging. Cashflow modelling can help bring that picture into focus, showing how your finances might evolve over time and enabling you to explore different possibilities before making important decisions.

By aligning your wealth with the life you want to lead, you can help you plan with greater clarity, confidence and peace of mind. Cashflow modelling uses assumptions about factors such as inflation, investment returns, income and expenditure. Actual outcomes may differ from the figures illustrated, and projections are not guaranteed.

## See the bigger picture

Your financial life comprises many moving parts. Income, expenditure, pensions, investments, property and other assets all play a role, but understanding how they work together is essential to planning for the future.

Cashflow modelling brings these elements together to illustrate how your financial position could change over time. By projecting potential income, expenditure and asset values across different life stages, it can help you assess whether your wealth is likely to support your ambitions and identify where adjustments may be needed.

The results can help you explore some of life's most important financial questions. Could you afford to reduce your working hours or retire earlier than planned? How much could you give to your children while maintaining your financial independence? Would buying a second property fit comfortably into your wider plans?

Seeing different scenarios laid out can make these decisions feel less overwhelming. Rather than relying on assumptions or putting off important choices, you can begin to understand what may be achievable and which steps could help you get there.

## Prepare for life's defining moments

Some of life's biggest decisions carry significant financial consequences. Selling a business, receiving an inheritance, changing careers, getting married or approaching retirement can all reshape your priorities and future plans.

Cashflow modelling helps you explore how different choices could affect your finances before committing to them. You could compare retiring at different ages, assess the potential impact of a major purchase or consider how reducing your income might affect your long-term financial security.

It can also help you prepare for less predictable events. What would happen if your investment values fell, you were unable to work for a period or your household faced unexpected expenses? How might your finances be affected by higher living costs or by the need to fund care in later life?

Considering these possibilities can highlight areas where additional savings, appropriate protection or changes to your plans may be worth exploring. While no model can remove uncertainty, thinking ahead can help you prepare for challenges without losing sight of the opportunities you aim to pursue.

## Balance today's ambitions with tomorrow's security

Planning for the future is not simply about accumulating more wealth. It is about making informed decisions that allow you to enjoy life today while maintaining financial security for the years ahead.

You may want to help your children financially, travel more often or enjoy a comfortable retirement. However, giving money away, making a substantial purchase or leaving work earlier than expected can affect the resources available to you later in life.



Cashflow modelling helps you explore these competing priorities and understand the potential trade-offs. By comparing different approaches, you may be able to identify a balance between enjoying the wealth you have built, supporting the people who matter to you and retaining sufficient resources for your future needs.

This can be particularly valuable when your financial decisions affect more than one generation. A clearer understanding of your future finances may help you assess how much support you can offer your family while safeguarding your independence and wellbeing.

### Keep your financial plan on track

When used alongside our professional financial advice, cashflow modelling will help you compare options, test assumptions and make more informed decisions. It can show whether you are on track to achieve your ambitions or highlight areas where you could benefit from adjusting your savings, spending or investment strategy.

Most importantly, it will give you a clearer framework for decision-making. Rather than wondering whether your plans are affordable, you can explore options, assess risks and take practical steps towards the future you want.

Your financial future should be shaped by your ambitions, not constrained by uncertainty over what you can afford. Whether you are considering early retirement, planning a major purchase, supporting your children or simply looking to make better use of the wealth you have built, understanding how your finances could evolve can be an important first step. ♦

### What could your wealth make possible?

You have worked hard to build your financial future. Now is the time to explore how it can support the life you want to lead. Cashflow modelling helps turn your aspirations into a tangible plan, giving you a clearer view of the opportunities available and the decisions that may help you achieve them.

We can help you understand your options through cash flow modelling tailored to your circumstances. Please contact us.

> Planning for the future is not simply about accumulating more wealth. It is about making informed decisions that allow you to enjoy life today while maintaining financial security for the years ahead.

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# Your retirement, your future, your way

## Are you ready to leave work behind and embrace the freedom to live life on your own terms?

**For many people,** retirement is the long-awaited chance to slow down, spend more time with family, travel or pursue interests set aside during working life. Yet as retirement approaches, excitement can be accompanied by uncertainty.

**Will your pension provide enough income?** Can you afford to stop working? What will everyday life look like without the structure of a job? Being ready to retire means looking beyond your finances to consider the lifestyle you want, the income you will need and the best way to fund the years ahead.

### Picture your ideal retirement

Retirement no longer has to mean an abrupt end to working life. Some people may prefer to reduce their hours gradually, take on consultancy work or explore a new venture, while others relish the prospect of leaving employment altogether. Consider what a fulfilling retirement means to you, including where you want to live, how you plan to spend your time and whether you would welcome a continued income. Discussing your plans with your partner or family will also help ensure your expectations are aligned.

Having a clear picture of your future can help you estimate how much money you will need. Consider your essential outgoings, such as housing, food and household bills, alongside discretionary spending on holidays, hobbies, entertainment and family commitments. Remember that costs can change throughout retirement. You might spend more on travel and leisure in the early years, while healthcare, home adaptations or care costs could become more significant later.

### Take stock of your finances

Start by reviewing your workplace and personal pensions, savings, Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs) and other investments. If you have changed jobs several times, check whether you have lost track of any pension pots. You can use the government's Pension Tracing Service to locate pension providers. You can also check your State Pension forecast online to see when you may qualify and how much you could receive.

Next, build a realistic retirement budget and consider how to convert your savings into a sustainable income. Inflation can gradually erode spending power, while investment values can fluctuate. Think carefully about how much you withdraw each year and whether your money could last for several decades. Consider outstanding debts, mortgage payments and any financial support you expect to provide to relatives. A financial planner can help you compare different retirement dates and income strategies.

### Find the right time to finish work

There is no universally right age to retire. Leaving work early may offer greater freedom, but it also means funding more years without a salary and potentially making fewer pension contributions. Delaying retirement could strengthen your financial position, although your health, family circumstances and personal priorities matter just as much as the numbers. A phased retirement, in which you gradually reduce your working hours, may offer a useful middle ground.

It is also sensible to prepare for unexpected expenses and changes in circumstances. Maintaining an accessible cash reserve, reviewing your investments regularly and considering how you would cope with lower-than-expected returns can provide valuable flexibility. Test your plans against different scenarios, including higher living costs or living longer than anticipated. The aim is not to predict every eventuality but to build a plan that can adapt.

### Make your next move with confidence

Feeling ready to retire means having the financial confidence and a sense of purpose to embrace your next chapter with optimism and peace of mind.

Before making your decision, review your plans with us to explore your options, understand potential risks and build a strategy tailored to your circumstances, helping you look ahead with greater clarity and confidence. ♦

### Ready to make your retirement dreams a reality?

The future is yours to shape, and the right planning today will help you embrace tomorrow with confidence. To explore your pension options, understand what your money could provide and build a retirement plan tailored to your goals, please contact us.

It's time to look forward to the next chapter of your life with greater freedom, security and peace of mind.

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# Who would make decisions on your behalf if you couldn't?

Protect your wishes, preserve your independence and give your loved ones greater peace of mind

**In the event that you were unable to manage your finances,** pay your bills or make important decisions about your care following a sudden illness or accident, who would step in to protect your financial interests, ensure your commitments were met and your wishes respected? It is not an easy scenario to contemplate, particularly when you feel fit and well, but unexpected circumstances can affect anyone at any stage of life.

Putting the right arrangements in place now can make a significant difference if you ever need support. A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) allows you to appoint people you trust to make certain decisions on your behalf, helping you retain control over who manages your affairs if you lose capacity. It can also spare your loved ones the uncertainty and additional stress of establishing legal authority during an already difficult time.

## Take control of your future

An LPA is a legal document that allows you to appoint one or more trusted people, known as attorneys, to make decisions on your behalf in specified circumstances. You must have mental capacity to set up an LPA, so it is worth considering as part of your wider financial planning rather than waiting for a health concern to arise.

In England and Wales, there are two types of LPA, each covering different aspects of your life.

- **Property and financial affairs LPA:** This covers decisions about your money and property, including paying bills, managing bank accounts, collecting pension income and handling property transactions.
- **Health and welfare LPA:** This covers decisions about your personal care, medical treatment and living arrangements, including where you live and, where applicable, decisions about life-sustaining treatment.

You can choose to establish one or both, depending on your circumstances and wishes. Having the appropriate arrangements in place can help ensure that the people you appoint have the authority to act when necessary.

## Choose the people you trust

Deciding who should act as your attorney is one of the most important parts of the process. You need people who understand your values, can make considered decisions and will act in your best interests while respecting your wishes.

You can appoint more than one attorney and specify whether they must make decisions jointly or may act independently on certain matters. You may also wish to appoint replacement attorneys in case your original choices are unable or unwilling to act in future.

An LPA does not automatically mean giving up control of your affairs. Provided you retain mental capacity, you can continue to make your own decisions.

A registered property and financial affairs LPA can be used with your permission while you still have capacity, depending on the arrangements you have made. A health and welfare LPA, however, can be used only when you lack the capacity to make the specific decision yourself.

Carefully considering your choices and explaining your wishes to those you appoint can help them understand your priorities if they need to act on your behalf.

## Understand the risks of leaving it too late

Without an LPA, relatives or friends do not automatically have the legal authority to manage your finances or make decisions about your welfare if you lose mental capacity. Even a spouse or adult child may need to apply to the Court of Protection for authority.

In England and Wales, this may involve applying to become a deputy, which can be time-consuming and costly, and create additional administrative burdens. In the meantime, managing financial commitments or making necessary decisions can become more difficult for those trying to help.

Putting an LPA in place while you have capacity lets you choose who will act for you, rather than leaving that decision to a formal process if your circumstances change. It can also be an important part of a wider financial plan, alongside your Will, pension arrangements and retirement planning.

## Make the right arrangements today

Taking action now does not mean expecting the worst. It means giving yourself the chance to plan ahead, protect your choices and make life easier for the people who matter most.

Planning ahead will help protect your financial interests, ensure your wishes are taken into account and give your loved ones greater peace of mind if circumstances change unexpectedly. ♦

### Have you put the right safeguards in place for your future?

If you would like to understand how a Lasting Power of Attorney could fit into your wider financial plans, contact us to discuss your circumstances and explore your options.

We will help you consider the role of an LPA alongside your retirement, wealth and estate planning, enabling you to take informed steps to safeguard your future.

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# For richer or poorer?

## How a prenup can protect your wealth from wedding vows to life's unexpected turns

**Imagine a high-profile couple facing divorce,** with a family home, business interests, investments and millions of pounds at stake. In Sky's legal drama *WAR*, starring Sienna Miller and Dominic West, a marital breakdown sparks a fierce financial battle, highlighting the complexity of dividing wealth when a relationship ends.



**While the series delivers plenty of courtroom tension**, the underlying question is one many couples should consider long before walking down the aisle: how can you protect the wealth you have worked hard to build?

## Prenuptial agreements

A prenuptial agreement, or prenup, could be part of the solution. Once associated primarily with the super-rich, prenups are increasingly relevant to anyone bringing property, savings, business assets or family wealth into a marriage.

With rising property values, family inheritances and increasingly complex financial arrangements, planning ahead can help couples gain greater clarity about their financial future.

## Planning for the unexpected

A prenup is an agreement entered into before marriage that sets out how a couple would like their finances to be divided in the event of a divorce. It can address existing assets, property, investments and business interests, as well as anticipated inheritances or gifts from family members. Couples may also wish to consider how future wealth, debts and other financial commitments should be treated.

Far from signalling a lack of trust, a well-considered agreement can encourage open conversations about money, expectations and financial responsibilities. Think of it as a form of financial planning: you hope never to need it, but having a plan in place can provide reassurance if circumstances change. Discussing these matters openly before marriage can also help couples avoid misunderstandings later.

## What protection can you expect?

In England and Wales, prenups are not automatically legally binding. Courts retain the final say over financial settlements on divorce, although they can give significant weight to a properly prepared agreement entered into freely. A prenup can therefore provide a useful framework, but it cannot guarantee that every provision will be upheld.

For an agreement to carry weight, both partners should fully disclose their finances, obtain independent legal advice and allow sufficient time to consider the terms without pressure. The agreement should be fair and take account of each partner's circumstances and needs. An arrangement that is unfair, improperly negotiated or fails to meet relevant needs may not be enforced by a court.

## Who stands to benefit?

Prenups can be particularly useful for people entering a second marriage, those with children from previous relationships, business owners and individuals expecting an inheritance. They can clarify how assets should be treated if a relationship ends and provide greater certainty for families planning how wealth will be passed down the generations. They may also help protect business interests from uncertainty during a divorce.

They are not exclusively for wealthy couples. Anyone seeking greater clarity about financial arrangements can consider whether an agreement is appropriate. A postnuptial agreement, entered into after marriage, may also be worth considering if a couple's circumstances change, for example after an inheritance, a business sale or a significant increase in wealth.

## Start the conversation early

The key is to plan well ahead of the wedding, rather than introducing a prenup at the last minute. Starting the conversation early gives both partners time to consider their options, seek professional advice and agree terms without undue pressure.

A specialist family solicitor can explain the legal implications, and we can help assess how well an agreement aligns with your wider financial plans. ♦

### Have you considered how marriage could affect your financial future?

Whether you are planning to marry, protect existing assets or consider passing wealth to the next generation, taking professional advice early can make a meaningful difference.

Contact us to discuss your wider financial plans and explore your options to protect your assets, safeguard family wealth and provide greater clarity and confidence as you plan for the future.

This article does not constitute tax, legal or financial advice and should not be relied upon as such. The law may change; seek professional advice before entering into an agreement. For guidance, seek professional advice.

“In England and Wales, prenups are not automatically legally binding. Courts retain the final say over financial settlements on divorce, although they can give significant weight to a properly prepared agreement entered into freely.”

# Lump sum or little and often?

## Discover the differences between lump-sum investing and drip-feeding



**Making your money work harder is an important consideration for anyone seeking long-term financial security.** Whether you have savings in a bank account, have received an inheritance, have benefited from a bonus or are looking to make the most of your annual Individual Savings Account (ISA) allowance, deciding how and when to invest can have a meaningful impact on your financial future.

**While keeping money in cash** can provide reassurance and easy access, inflation may gradually erode its purchasing power. Investing offers the potential for longer-term growth, although returns are never guaranteed and the value of investments can fall as well as rise.

### Raising an important question

This raises an important question: is it better to invest a lump sum straight away, giving your money more time in the market, or to spread your contributions over several months to help manage the uncertainty of market movements?

Both approaches have their merits, and understanding the potential benefits and drawbacks of each can help you make a more informed decision that aligns with your financial goals, investment timeframe and risk attitude.

### A case for investing early

Lump-sum investing means putting a larger amount of money into the market in one go. For long-term investors, this can be an effective strategy because your money has more time to grow, to benefit from reinvested income and to take advantage of compounding, where investment returns generate further returns over time.

Historically, markets have tended to rise over the long term, despite periodic downturns. Therefore, investing earlier has often delivered better average returns than gradually investing the same amount. However, past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results, and investing a lump sum just before a market fall can be unsettling.

### Why drip-feeding can ease concerns

Drip-feeding involves investing smaller amounts at regular intervals, typically monthly. Also known as 'pound-cost averaging', this approach means buying investments at different prices. When markets fall, your contributions buy more units; when prices rise, they buy fewer units.

This can help reduce the emotional pressure of investing a substantial sum at once, particularly during periods of uncertainty. It also suits those who invest from their monthly salary, enabling them to build a portfolio gradually. However, drip-feeding does not eliminate investment risk, and holding cash while waiting to invest can mean missing out on potential market growth.

### Finding the right balance

The choice is not necessarily all or nothing. A blended approach could involve investing part of your available funds immediately and spreading the remainder over several months. This allows some funds to benefit from earlier investment while offering reassurance to those concerned about short-term market movements.

Your decision should reflect your investment timeframe, financial circumstances and attitude to risk. Consider whether you have sufficient accessible savings for emergencies and whether you can withstand market falls without selling investments prematurely. A diversified portfolio aligned with your long-term goals is also important, regardless of your preferred investment method.

### Make your money work for you

Ultimately, lump-sum investing has historically had the advantage of getting your money into the market sooner, giving it more time to benefit from potential growth. However, investing a large sum at once can feel daunting, particularly when markets are uncertain or you are concerned about the possibility of short-term losses. Drip-feeding your money into investments over time can offer a more gradual approach, helping you build confidence and establish a disciplined investment habit without feeling you need to time the market exactly right.

The most suitable strategy is one that aligns with your financial goals, personal circumstances and attitude to risk. While market fluctuations are inevitable, understanding your options and having a clear plan can help you stay focused on the bigger picture rather than reacting to every market movement. Ultimately, investing is not just about maximising returns; it is about finding an approach you feel comfortable with and can sustain over the long term. ♦

### Ready to take the next step with your investments?

Whether you are investing a lump sum or building your portfolio through regular contributions, understanding your options is essential to making informed financial decisions. For further guidance on investing, ISAs, pensions or long-term financial planning, please speak to us.

We'll help you assess your financial goals and identify an investment strategy that suits your individual circumstances and attitude to risk.

This article does not constitute tax, legal or financial advice and should not be relied upon as such. For guidance, seek professional advice. Past performance is not a guide to future performance and may not be repeated. The value of investments and the income from them may go up or down, and investors may not get back the amount originally invested.



# Could the right trust transform your legacy?

## Protect your wealth to shape the future you want to leave

**Planning what happens to your wealth after your death** is one of the most important steps you can take to protect your family's financial future. Whether you own property, have built up savings and investments, or want to ensure your children and grandchildren are provided for, deciding how your assets should be passed on requires careful thought.

**For many families**, estate planning is not simply about distributing wealth; it is about preserving financial security, protecting vulnerable loved ones and ensuring that personal wishes are respected.

A trust can play a valuable role in achieving these objectives, offering a structured way to manage assets and to determine who benefits from them and when.

However, trusts are not suitable for every situation, and choosing the right arrangement is essential to ensure it meets your needs, reflects your family circumstances and aligns with your wider estate plan.

### Understanding your options

Trusts are not one-size-fits-all arrangements. Different types serve different purposes, so choosing the right structure depends on your family circumstances, financial objectives and how you wish your assets to be distributed.

A bare trust gives a beneficiary an entitlement to the assets, whereas a discretionary trust allows the trustees to decide who benefits, when and in what amount.

A life interest trust can provide a surviving spouse or registered civil partner with income or the use of specified assets for their lifetime, while preserving capital for children or other beneficiaries.

Specialist arrangements may also help vulnerable beneficiaries.

### Avoiding common misconceptions

Trusts are sometimes seen as a straightforward way to protect the family home from Inheritance Tax or future care costs. In practice, the outcome depends on the trust type, its terms and the relevant legislation.

A trust does not automatically remove assets from Inheritance Tax calculations or prevent them from being considered in a care fee assessment.

That does not diminish the value of trusts. When structured appropriately, they can offer greater control over the transfer of wealth and help balance competing family needs.

For example, a trust may help provide for a surviving partner during their lifetime while preserving assets for children from a previous relationship. The key is to understand what a trust is intended to achieve, rather than assume it offers protections that may not apply.

### Keeping your plans up to date

Estate planning should not be a one-off exercise. Marriage, divorce, the arrival of children or grandchildren, changes in wealth and the death of a beneficiary can all affect whether existing arrangements remain suitable.

Reviewing your Will regularly can help ensure that any trusts still reflect your intentions and that your chosen trustees remain appropriate.

It is also important to consider how your estate plan aligns with your broader financial arrangements. Trustees have duties to manage trust assets in accordance with the trust's terms and with applicable law. We can discuss drafting or amending Will trusts and help you understand how they align with your long-term objectives.

### Take the next step

If you are unsure whether a trust in your Will remains appropriate, or if your estate plan has not been reviewed for several years, seeking professional advice will help ensure your arrangements continue to reflect your wishes and family circumstances. ♦

### Time to protect the legacy you leave behind?

Your wealth represents a lifetime of hard work, milestones and memories. Ensuring it passes to the people who matter most, in the way you intend, starts with the right estate planning advice. Whether you want to review an existing trust or explore your options for the future, we are here to help.

Please get in touch to discuss how we can help you assess whether your existing arrangements continue to reflect your wishes.

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# Is your cash holding you back?

## Striking the right balance between financial security and long-term growth

**With household bills, mortgage costs and everyday expenses putting pressure on finances,** keeping money in cash can feel like the safest option. A healthy savings balance can provide reassurance, help cover unexpected costs and offer flexibility when life takes an unexpected turn. But while cash has an important role in any financial plan, holding too much can mean missing opportunities to grow your wealth over the longer term.

**The challenge** is finding the right balance between financial security today and achieving your ambitions for tomorrow. Whether you are saving for a property, building a retirement fund or simply setting money aside for a rainy day, understanding how much cash you need is an important first step.

### Find your financial comfort zone

Cash savings are essential for short-term needs and unexpected expenses. An emergency fund equivalent to three to six months of essential living costs is often a useful starting point, though the right amount depends on your circumstances, job security and financial commitments. Funds for planned expenses over the next few years may also be best kept in an accessible savings account, where their value is less exposed to market fluctuations.

Once you have established an appropriate safety net and set aside funds for foreseeable costs, it may be worth reviewing whether the rest of your cash is working as hard as it could. Leaving substantial sums in a low-interest account can limit your potential returns, particularly when inflation is rising.

### Understand the impact of inflation

Inflation gradually erodes what your money can buy. If the interest earned on your savings is lower than the rate of inflation, the spending power of your cash falls over time, even if the balance in your account increases. This can be particularly significant for people holding large cash reserves over many years, including those approaching retirement or already drawing an income from their savings.

For example, if inflation averages 3% a year, something costing £1,000 today would cost about £1,344 in ten years. Unless your savings grow sufficiently to keep pace, your money may not stretch as far in the future. Reviewing savings rates regularly and comparing suitable accounts can help, although interest rates and inflation will change over time.

### Match your money to your goals

For money you will not need for several years, investing may offer greater long-term growth potential than cash savings. Depending on your circumstances and attitude to risk, options could include a Stocks & Shares Individual Savings Account, pension contributions or a diversified investment portfolio. Tax-efficient allowances may also help you make better use of your money.

Investments can fall as well as rise in value, and you may get back less than you invest. The right approach depends on your time horizon, financial goals and risk tolerance.

### Build a plan around you

Holding cash is not necessarily a mistake; the key is ensuring your savings align with your needs and future plans. A review of your finances can help determine whether your money is appropriately allocated between accessible savings and longer-term opportunities. ♦

**Is it time to protect your savings from inflation and make your money work harder for the future you want?**

Give your hard-earned money the chance to work as hard as you do. Holding cash can offer peace of mind, but keeping too much in savings could mean missing opportunities to grow your wealth and achieve the future you deserve.

Take the first step towards making your money work harder. Contact us to explore your options.

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# What legacy will you leave beyond wealth?

## How to plan your family's financial future by giving the gift of tomorrow

**Passing wealth to the next generation is about more than money.** Behind every family home, investment portfolio or business lies a story of hard work, sacrifice and aspirations for the future. Many families want to provide loved ones with financial security and opportunities, yet they spend less time discussing how their wealth should be passed on.

**Starting these conversations early** can clarify expectations and help prevent misunderstandings. Discussing family values, future ambitions and concerns about fairness can help each generation understand what matters most and ensure that wealth is passed on in line with the family's wishes.

### Starting the conversation

One of the first questions to consider is simple: what do you want your wealth to achieve? For some, the priority may be helping children onto the property ladder; for others, it could be funding education, supporting grandchildren or preserving a family business. Understanding these wishes provides a starting point for discussions about who should benefit, when support might be needed and how much can realistically be given.

These conversations should also address the needs of the person giving the wealth. How much money will be needed to maintain their lifestyle throughout retirement? Could future care costs affect what is available to pass on? Would gifting money now provide greater value to the family, or would retaining control offer greater peace of mind? Answering these questions can help families balance generosity with financial security and avoid commitments that may be difficult to reverse.

### Addressing the difficult questions

Fairness is another important consideration. Does treating children equally mean giving them identical amounts, or should individual circumstances influence the decision? One child may already be financially secure, while another may need help with a deposit or be taking on caring responsibilities. Explaining the reasoning behind decisions can help manage expectations and reduce the risk of later family disagreements.

It is also important to discuss practical arrangements. Is there an up-to-date Will? Who will manage the estate and are the intended beneficiaries aware of the plans? Could Inheritance Tax (IHT) affect the amount ultimately received? Lifetime gifts, available exemptions and trusts may be relevant, but the rules can be complex and depend on individual circumstances. We can help clarify the options and ensure the arrangements reflect the family's intentions and current legislation.

### Preparing the next generation

The conversation should not end with deciding who receives what. Are younger family members equipped to manage an inheritance responsibly? Do they understand budgeting, investing, taxation and the importance of protecting capital over the long term? Sharing knowledge and involving the next generation in appropriate financial discussions can help prepare them for the responsibilities that come with wealth.

Ultimately, successful wealth transfer begins with honest conversations, thoughtful questions and a shared understanding of the family's priorities. Starting early gives everyone time to consider options, address concerns and make informed decisions without undue pressure. ♦

### Will your legacy last for generations?

The wealth you have worked hard to build can shape your family's future for years to come. It's important to understand the tax implications and to create a plan that reflects your wishes, protects your loved ones and provides the next generation with a stronger financial foundation.

Start the conversation today. Speak with us, and we'll help you explore your options.

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# Invest for the future, not the headlines

## Stay focused on your goals during periods of market uncertainty

**Financial markets rarely move in a straight line.** Investment values can rise steadily one year and fall sharply the next, as economic uncertainty, geopolitical events and shifting interest rates affect investor confidence. In 2026, the conflict involving the United States, Israel and Iran, the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, and renewed trade tensions between major economies have contributed to a globally uncertain environment.

**Disruptions to energy supplies** and shipping routes have heightened concerns about inflation and economic growth, underscoring how events beyond investors' control can influence markets. For those watching their savings fluctuate, the temptation to sell investments and wait for calmer conditions is understandable. However, reacting to every headline can undermine a long-term strategy and make it harder to benefit when markets recover.

Patience and discipline are essential when investing towards long-term goals. Rather than attempting to predict every market movement, investors can focus on maintaining a strategy that aligns with their objectives, financial circumstances and risk tolerance.

### Build value over time

Investing is a long-term commitment, not a race to capture every market rise or avoid every fall. Although past performance cannot guarantee future returns, markets have recovered from many periods of turbulence. Remaining invested gives a portfolio the opportunity to benefit from potential recoveries, whereas selling during a downturn can turn temporary paper losses into permanent ones.

The geopolitical developments of 2026 underscore the importance of maintaining perspective. Conflict in the Middle East has disrupted energy markets and shipping routes, including the strategically important Strait of Hormuz, putting pressure on oil prices and reigniting inflation concerns. Meanwhile, the war in Ukraine and uncertainty over international trade have raised questions about supply chains, government spending and global economic growth.

Although these events can trigger sharp market movements, their longer-term effects on individual investments and economies are not always immediately apparent. Investors who focus solely on short-term developments risk making decisions before the wider implications are clear.

Time can also allow investments to benefit from compounding, whereby returns generate further returns. Reinvested dividends and investment growth can accumulate over the years, potentially making a meaningful difference to a portfolio's value. The longer the investment horizon, the greater the opportunity for this effect to build, although returns are never guaranteed.

### Why timing the market is difficult

Moving into cash when markets fall and reinvesting when confidence returns may seem sensible, but consistently identifying the best times to buy and sell is notoriously difficult. Market recoveries can occur unexpectedly, sometimes after periods of significant decline.

Missing just a few of the market's strongest recovery days can have a considerable effect on long-term returns. Frequent trading may also incur additional costs and encourage decisions driven by fear rather than by financial objectives.

Geopolitical uncertainty adds another layer of complexity. For example, rising energy prices may benefit some energy producers while increasing costs for businesses and households elsewhere. Trade restrictions can pose challenges for companies reliant on international supply chains while encouraging investment in domestic production or alternative suppliers.

These varied effects make it difficult to predict how individual investments will respond to global events. Rather than attempting to anticipate every outcome, investors may benefit from a measured approach grounded in a suitable investment strategy, a realistic time horizon and clearly defined financial goals.

### Keeping a balanced perspective

Maintaining a long-term outlook does not mean ignoring risk or refusing to adapt. Investments should reflect an individual's financial circumstances, objectives, risk tolerance and capacity for loss. Regular reviews can help ensure a portfolio remains appropriate as personal priorities and needs evolve.



Diversification is another important consideration during periods of uncertainty. A portfolio concentrated in a single country, industry or asset class may be particularly vulnerable to regional conflicts, energy price shocks, trade restrictions or changes in government policy. Spreading investments across different asset classes, sectors and geographical markets can help manage risk, although it cannot eliminate losses. Global markets may also become more closely correlated during periods of severe stress.

Understanding how economic developments could affect different parts of a portfolio can help investors make informed decisions. Changes in energy prices may put pressure on businesses with high operating costs, while shifts in trade policy can affect companies that rely on international supply chains. Political uncertainty can also influence currencies, government bond yields and expectations about interest rates.

Personal circumstances matter just as much as market conditions. Someone approaching retirement or expecting to access their investments soon may need a different investment mix to someone saving for a goal several decades away. Holding an appropriate level of accessible cash can help cover short-term expenses without forcing the sale of investments during a downturn.

### Making your money work for you

Successful long-term investing is often less about reacting to every market headline and more about adhering to a clear, carefully considered plan. The events of 2026 serve as a reminder that markets are shaped by a complex mix of economic conditions, political decisions and international developments, many of which are impossible to predict with certainty.

Volatility is an inevitable part of investing, but a strategy tailored to your goals and circumstances can help put short-term uncertainty into perspective. By reviewing your investments regularly, maintaining appropriate diversification and staying focused on long-term objectives, you can make more considered decisions rather than letting the headlines dictate your actions.

No investment strategy can eliminate risk or guarantee positive returns. However, a disciplined approach can help you navigate uncertain periods with greater confidence, giving your investments the chance to support your financial goals over time. ♦

**Will you let market uncertainty prevent you from achieving your financial goals?**

To discuss and understand how a long-term investment strategy can support your financial future, speak to us for professional advice.

We can help you assess your options, understand the risks and develop an investment approach tailored to your circumstances and long-term ambitions.

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“Successful long-term investing is often less about reacting to every market headline and more about adhering to a clear, carefully considered plan. The events of 2026 serve as a reminder that markets are shaped by a complex mix of economic conditions, political decisions and international developments, many of which are impossible to predict with certainty.”

# Protecting your wealth as your financial circumstances change

## When success brings greater financial complexity, how will you protect what you've built?

**Building wealth often takes years of hard work,** careful decisions and personal sacrifices. Whether you have grown a successful business, accumulated property and investments, or built up assets to pass on to your family, reaching a new stage in your financial life can bring both exciting opportunities and important responsibilities.



**Selling a business**, receiving an inheritance or preparing to transfer wealth to your children may significantly alter your financial position, potentially creating new tax liabilities and decisions that could affect your family's future.

When business interests, investments, pensions, trusts and overseas assets overlap, the challenge is not simply to minimise tax. It is to ensure that your financial arrangements work together, reflect your priorities and protect the wealth you have worked hard to build.

A coordinated approach can help you make informed decisions, manage potential risks and build a plan that supports both your financial security and your long-term legacy.

## Look beyond the immediate tax bill

As financial affairs become more complex, it is important to understand how each part of your financial position interacts with the others. Multiple income sources, investment returns and property holdings can affect tax thresholds and allowances, while changes in legislation may alter the effectiveness of existing arrangements. A strategy that suited your circumstances several years ago may no longer be the most appropriate option.

Rather than focusing exclusively on short-term tax savings, consider what you ultimately want your wealth to achieve. You may wish to maintain financial independence, support your children as they establish their own lives, protect family assets or ensure your estate is distributed according to your wishes.

Taking a broader view will help you weigh the potential tax implications of financial decisions against their wider costs, benefits and long-term consequences.

## Keep your plans aligned with changing circumstances

Wealth planning should evolve as your life and financial priorities change. Events such as selling a business, receiving an inheritance, entering or ending a marriage, approaching retirement or moving overseas can all affect your tax position, estate plans and future financial needs.

Regular reviews can help identify opportunities and potential complications before they become more difficult or costly to address. They also provide an opportunity to check that your investments, pension arrangements, estate plans and legal documents remain consistent with your current circumstances and intentions.

Legislative changes can be equally important. Reviewing your arrangements when relevant rules change, or before making a significant financial decision, can help you understand the implications and assess whether adjustments may be appropriate.

## Choose the right structures for your wealth

How you own and manage your assets can be as important as the assets themselves. Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs) and pensions offer valuable tax advantages, while trusts, family investment companies and other structures can help manage family wealth and plan for succession.

However, no single arrangement suits everyone. Trusts and family investment companies, for example, can entail establishment costs, ongoing administration and specific legal or tax considerations. Their suitability will depend on factors such as the nature of your assets, your family circumstances, your objectives and the degree of control you wish to retain.

Understanding the advantages, limitations and potential consequences of each option is essential before making a decision. With our professional advice, we can help you assess the alternatives and determine whether a particular structure aligns with your wider financial plan.

## Protect the wealth you want to pass on

For many families, preserving wealth for future generations is about more than the amount ultimately inherited. It is also about providing financial support, maintaining family stability and ensuring that assets are transferred in line with personal wishes.

Inheritance Tax planning may be an important part of this process. Depending on your circumstances and the relevant eligibility requirements, options such as gifting, trusts, qualifying business or agricultural reliefs, and life assurance may warrant consideration. The rules and tax treatment of these arrangements can be complex, so it is important to understand the implications before taking action. The tax treatment depends on individual circumstances and may change in the future.

Practical preparation matters, too. Keeping your Will up to date, reviewing beneficiary nominations and considering whether appropriate powers of attorney are in place can help ensure your wishes are properly documented. Open conversations with family members, where appropriate, can also help manage expectations, reduce uncertainty and minimise the potential for disagreements.

Planning ahead gives you more time to consider your options carefully and helps ensure that decisions are guided by your priorities rather than made in haste. ♦


### Is your wealth protected for the future you want to build?

As your financial affairs become more complex, having the right plan in place can help protect what you have built and provide greater clarity for those who matter most. Contact us to discuss your circumstances, review your existing arrangements and explore the options available to you.

Together, we can help you consider how your wealth may be managed, protected and passed on in a way that reflects your priorities and long-term ambitions.


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# Time to make your pension allowance work harder for you?

Exploring opportunities for tax-efficient pension contributions

**Planning for retirement can feel a long way off, particularly when mortgage payments,** household bills and everyday expenses compete for your income. However, the earlier you start putting money aside, the greater the opportunity for your savings to grow over time. Pension contributions can also offer valuable tax advantages, helping you make more of your money work towards your future. However, pensions are normally invested, so their value can fall as well as rise, and you may get back less than you invest.

**Whether you are just starting to save**, increasing your contributions as your income rises or approaching retirement and looking to boost your pension pot, understanding the rules on annual contribution limits is essential. Knowing how much you can pay in, the tax relief available and when restrictions might apply can help you plan effectively and avoid an unexpected tax bill.

## How much can you pay into a pension?

For the 2026/27 tax year, the standard annual pension allowance is £60,000. This is the maximum amount that can usually be contributed to your pensions each tax year before an annual allowance tax charge may apply. It includes your own contributions, payments from your employer and contributions made through salary sacrifice.

The annual allowance is not the only limit to consider. Tax relief on personal contributions is generally limited to 100% of your relevant UK earnings, or £3,600 a year, whichever is higher, including tax relief. This means that people with little or no earnings may still be able to benefit from pension tax relief, subject to the rules. Tax treatment depends on individual circumstances and may change in the future.

## When your allowance could be lower

Higher earners may face a reduced allowance under the tapered annual allowance rules. For 2026/27, this applies if your threshold income exceeds £200,000 and your adjusted income exceeds £260,000. Your allowance reduces by £1 for every £2 of adjusted income above £260,000, down to a minimum of £10,000.

Your allowance may also be affected if you have already started accessing your pension. If you flexibly withdraw taxable money from a defined contribution pension, you may trigger the money purchase annual allowance (MPAA), which is £10,000 for 2026/27. This can restrict future contributions eligible for tax relief, and any unused allowance from previous years cannot be carried forward to increase this limit.

## Making use of unused allowance

If you have not used your full annual allowance in the previous three tax years, you may be able to carry forward the unused amount and make a larger pension contribution. You must have sufficient earnings in the year to justify the level of contribution, including any carry-forward. You must also have been a member of a registered pension scheme in those earlier years, though you do not necessarily need to have contributed. Other restrictions, including the tapered allowance, may apply.

This can be particularly useful if you receive a bonus, experience a rise in income or want to boost your retirement savings as you approach retirement. Before making a substantial contribution, review your pension statements, employer payments and previous allowances to determine how much headroom you have.

## Keep your pension plans on track

Exceeding your annual allowance could leave you with an unexpected tax bill, so it is important to review your contributions regularly, particularly if your earnings fluctuate or you have multiple pensions.

Because the rules can be complex, understanding how they apply to your income and personal circumstances will help you avoid costly surprises and make better use of your retirement savings. ♦

### Need help planning your pension contributions?

If you would like to understand how the pension contribution limits apply to your circumstances, please get in touch with us for further information and guidance.

We can help you explore your options, make the most of available tax benefits and plan with greater confidence for your financial future. We look forward to hearing from you.

This article does not constitute tax, legal or financial advice and should not be relied upon as such. For guidance, seek professional advice. A pension is a long-term investment not normally accessible until age 55 (57 from april 2028, unless the plan has a protected pension age). The value of your investments (and any income from them) can go down as well as up, and you may receive back less than you invest, affecting the level of pension benefits available.



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