

Essentially Wealth

Q3 2025

Gen X are
stashing the
cash – time
to invest
instead?

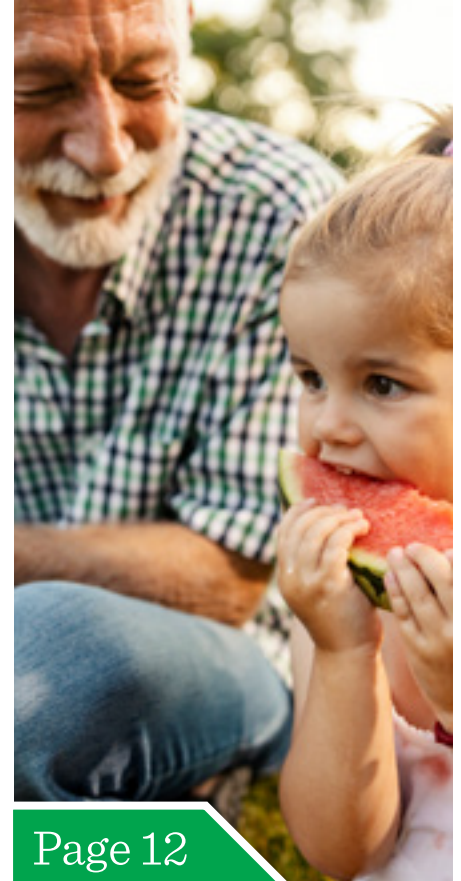
Is your pension going
to the right person?
A common blind spot

Investing with
confidence – *'keep
calm and carry on'*

Your relationship
with risk: time
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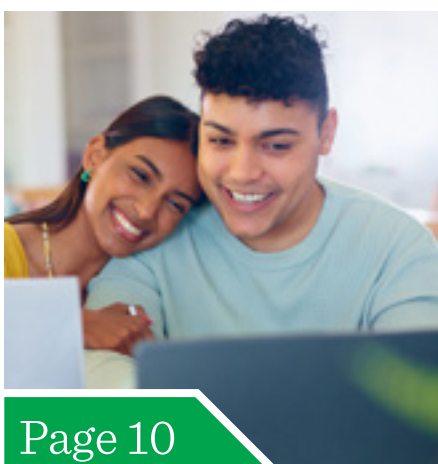
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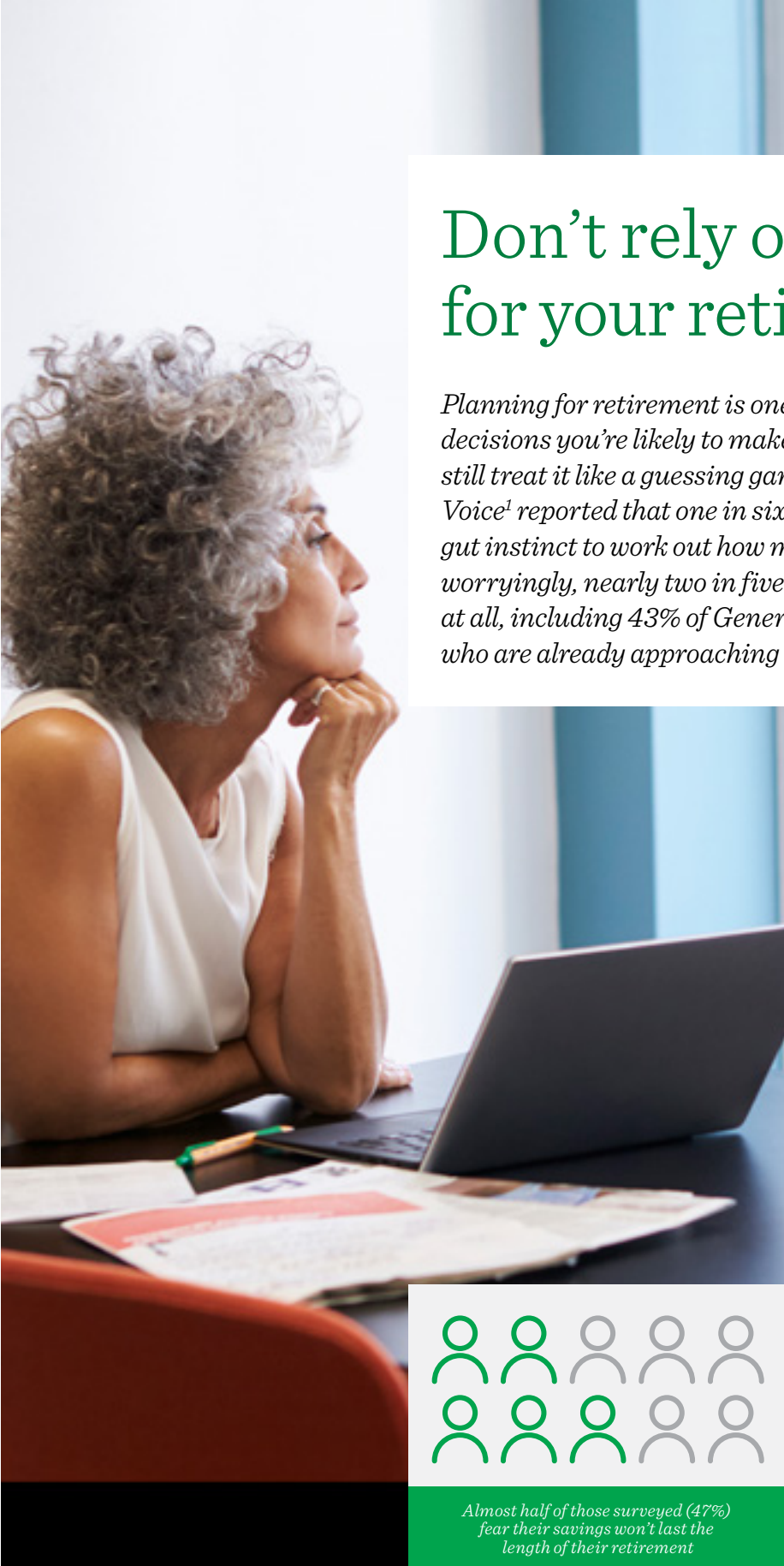
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Don't rely on gut instinct for your retirement needs

Planning for retirement is one of the most important financial decisions you're likely to make, yet a surprising number of people still treat it like a guessing game. Standard Life's Retirement Voice¹ reported that one in six UK adults (16%) are relying on gut instinct to work out how much they'll need in later life. More worryingly, nearly two in five (39%) don't have a retirement target at all, including 43% of Generation X and 34% of Baby Boomers, who are already approaching or beyond State Pension age.

This uncertainty breeds unease. Almost half of those surveyed (47%) fear their savings won't last the length of their retirement. And with so many unknowns – including how long you'll live, when you'll retire, the impact of inflation, your desired lifestyle – it's easy to see why guesswork falls short. Common pitfalls include relying too heavily on the State Pension, just £230.25 per week in the 2025/26 tax year. People also underestimate how long retirement might last or forget to factor in taxes and irregular costs. Retirement spending isn't a steady decline either, it often peaks in early active years and again in later life due to health or care needs.

Planning beats guessing

Whether you're approaching retirement or still decades away, planning beats guessing. It's never too late to get clarity. A good place to start is to think about when you want to retire, explore your income options, and work out whether your retirement savings are likely to support the lifestyle you want.

Everyone's retirement needs are different, dictated by their personal goals, family, health and location. That's why personalised planning matters. We can help remove the guesswork by using your details and requirements to calculate realistic scenarios for retirement, and help you make changes now that could help prevent you from falling short when you retire.

¹Standard Life, 2025



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*Don't risk
your pension
falling into the
wrong hands*

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Is your pension going to the right person? A common blind spot

One in six people with a partner are unsure who would inherit their pension savings if they were to die before accessing them². While the majority – 65% – have nominated their spouse or partner as their named beneficiary, others have chosen different paths: one in five say they have selected another family member, while a small number say they are leaving their pension pot to a charity (4%) or a friend (3%).

However, a concerning proportion of respondents did not know who their beneficiary would be. In particular, people living with a partner but neither married nor in a civil partnership were especially likely to be unaware – 25% of these respondents didn't know who would receive their pension.

Similarly, uncertainty was highest among the youngest (ages 16–24) and the oldest (79+) respondents, with 10% and 18% respectively unable to name a beneficiary.

The risk of outdated choices

More concerning still, 3% of respondents suspect their pension may still be designated to an ex-partner. In fact, a separate study³ found one in 10 divorcees had forgotten to remove their former partner as a life insurance beneficiary.



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Keep your wishes up to date

To make sure your pension savings go to the right person, it's essential to review your nominated beneficiary regularly. Life changes – so should your financial paperwork. Don't risk your pension falling into the wrong hands – review your beneficiary regularly to ensure it reflects your current wishes and circumstances.

²Aviva, 2025, ³Legal & General, 2025

Navigating the great wealth transfer – what it means for you

Over the next 30 years, an estimated £5.5 to £7trn in wealth will pass from one generation to the next in the UK. This significant transfer – of money, property and other assets – will happen through inheritance, gifts and estate transfers. Understanding how it could affect your financial future is crucial, no matter what life stage you're in.

Starting the conversation – how to protect what you've built

Baby boomers (born 1946–1964) currently hold more than half of the UK's wealth⁴. Many in this generation are financially stable but concerned about ensuring their legacy benefits their children or grandchildren. The key is to start the conversation with family members early. This means taking a proactive approach to financial planning – securing your legacy will bring peace of mind.

Seeking support to plan – how to save time and stress

Generation X (born 1965–1980) is likely to be the first major group to inherit during this wealth shift. Often juggling mortgages, careers and family responsibilities, this generation is time-poor. While wealth transfer might not be top of mind – seeking advice

now with retirement, general financial planning and starting conversations with your parents, can save you time and stress later. Advice to simplify your decisions, reduce debt, invest wisely, understand taxes, tune into estate planning and prioritise long-term goals to manage inherited wealth with confidence, will prove beneficial.

Building for the future – how to reach your financial goals

Millennials (1981–1996), while typically owning less wealth than older generations, are increasingly motivated to shape their financial futures. To build confidence and prepare a solid financial plan for the next 30 years (and beyond), it is a good idea to start working with us early, so you're well-equipped to deal with what's coming your way.

⁴Vanguard



Plan with purpose

No matter your age or life stage, early planning and informed conversations are your best tools in navigating the great wealth transfer. Seeking advice will help you embrace the future with confidence





Nearly three quarters of people don't understand Inheritance Tax

Inheritance Tax (IHT) often features in the news, but a new report shows most people still don't understand how it works.

A recent report⁵ has found that while 77% of UK adults were aware of IHT, 71% didn't understand IHT rules or what their beneficiaries might have to pay. More troublingly, just 27% of respondents planned on taking advice about how to deal with a potential IHT liability due on their estate. This lack of action will likely lead to unexpected tax bills and added stress for loved ones.

The 'last great family taboo'

The report surveyed 1,000 adults across four generations, and revealed that 40% consider inheritance and estate planning to be the 'last great family taboo.' Millennials emerged as the most forward-thinking generation when it comes to their finances. Yet were the least likely to have sought professional advice, which could cost them in the long run.

Also, a general reluctance to have conversations with loved ones around inheritance can be costly, especially as rising property values have pulled more estates into the IHT net. Given the government has announced plans to include pensions within IHT from 2027, even more families could be left facing an IHT bill in future.

Time to talk it out

The good news is that it's not too late to rethink current estate and retirement plans. Estate planning can be a catalyst for some much-needed family conversations around wealth and legacy.

⁵Schroders Personal Wealth's Family and Finances Report, 2025

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Inheritance Tax receipts hit new highs – why planning matters more than ever

HMRC figures⁶ show the 2024/25 tax year saw a record £8.2bn raised in IHT, a £800m increase on the previous tax year. The new tax year kicked off in the same vein with the Treasury collecting £780m in IHT in April 2025 alone, up £97m from April 2024 – making it the second-highest monthly IHT total on record.



The OBR's Spring Statement forecast, outlines expected IHT revenues of £9.1bn in 2025/26, rising to over £14bn by 2030. The uptick can be attributed to rising property and asset values, alongside frozen thresholds, which are combining to pull more households into the IHT net and accelerating the mainstreaming of IHT as a planning concern.

Since thresholds were frozen in April 2022, IHT receipts have surged by more than 21%, leaving many estates facing tax bills in the six-figure range that would have been unlikely just a few years ago.

Planning ahead pays off

These record figures are prompting more people to take action, using options like gifting, exemptions, trusts and pension planning to reduce potential liabilities. With IHT impacting more families than ever before, careful planning can make a significant difference to what loved ones inherit.

⁶HMRC, 2025

Gen X are stashing the cash – time to invest instead?

New research⁷ shows nearly two-thirds of Britons born between 1965 and 1980 – Generation X – are holding ‘significant’ savings in cash, with average balances of £34,114. Despite the higher potential returns from investing, almost half of this group still view investing in stocks and shares as ‘too risky.’

Savings are strong – but static

Many Gen Xers are diligent savers, having built up cash reserves steadily throughout their working lives. Now in their late 40s to 50s, they’re laying solid groundwork for retirement. However, only holding savings in cash means missing out on the potential upsides of investing. Fewer than one in three Gen X cash savers also invest in stocks, shares or mutual funds, limiting the potential for long-term growth – with hard-earned cash falling ever further behind the pace of inflation.

⁷Just Group, 2025



We can help you find the right mix of cash savings and investment



The case for balance

Maintaining a cash buffer for emergencies is a smart move, but leaning too heavily on cash can erode wealth over time. Historically, investing has delivered stronger returns over the long term (though not guaranteed), so keeping all your money in cash means foregoing these potential rewards.

Achieving a better balance of cash and stocks can maximise your returns without taking undue risk. We can help you find the right mix of cash savings and investments, at a risk exposure that feels right for you.



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results in missed
opportunities*
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Investing with confidence – ‘keep calm and carry on’

When Donald Trump announced tariffs in April - on what was dubbed ‘Liberation Day’ – global markets reacted dipping sharply. While markets later steadied, uncertainty is never too far away. In fact, geopolitical events, global tensions and market reactions are expected and normal – they are regular parts of investing.

The elusive ‘perfect time’

It’s understandable to feel hesitant when the outlook is unclear, but waiting for the ‘right’ moment to invest often results in missed opportunities. Markets have historically recovered – history shows some of the best investment days followed the worst days, although trying to predict when is notoriously difficult.

Staying rational in a reactive market

Headlines can lead to emotionally driven decisions, like selling investments too soon, but making investment decisions based on emotions rather than strategy

rarely lead to better outcomes.

A well-diversified portfolio is constructed to handle short-term volatility, allowing you to focus on your long-term financial goals instead of reacting to every market move.

Time in the market

Being invested for the long haul tends to outperform efforts to jump in and out of the market. Consistent market participation is more effective than trying to time short-term ups and downs. In essence, it’s not about timing the market - it’s about time in the market. It may be an old adage, but it’s a good one!

Keep focused

We can help you build a plan that reflects your personal goals, time horizon and comfort with risk – giving you the confidence to invest calmly and with clarity, no matter how the markets behave.

Young investors lead the charge

UK investors are showing optimism, with the past year marking a clear shift in sentiment – especially among younger wealth-builders. According to recent research⁸, overall investment confidence has risen by 25% year-on-year, with 65% of UK adults now feeling optimistic about investing.

Confidence is particularly strong among the rising generation of high-net-worth individuals. Among 25 to 34-year-olds, 87% expressed confidence in investing – a 15% jump from the previous year. Meanwhile, 75% of 18 to 24-year-olds shared similar optimism, up 10% year-on-year.

Participation picks up

Investor participation is also increasing. Currently, 31% of UK adults are actively investing, up 5% from last year. Among 25 to 34-year-olds, that number jumps to 54% – a notable 13% increase. And the momentum continues: 26% of this age group plan to start investing in 2025, with 38% intending to boost their contributions.

Turning confidence into action

This shift marks a generational pivot toward long-term wealth creation – an encouraging development. Holding excess cash might feel secure, but over time it risks erosion and missed opportunity. A clear, long-term investment strategy, guided by advice, can turn confidence into action and help ensure your money supports your long-term goals.

⁸Moneybox, 2025

65% of UK adults are now feeling optimistic about investing

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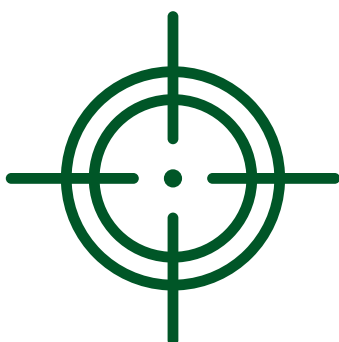


risk tolerance

how much risk feels comfortable

risk capacity

how much risk you can afford based on your goals and circumstances



We're here to help you invest with purpose
– not emotion



Your relationship with risk: time to reassess?

Your attitude to investment risk isn't set in stone. Life changes, goals shift, markets evolve. Whether you're approaching retirement, have received a windfall, or are simply re-evaluating your priorities, it's natural for your appetite for risk to change over time. Is your current investment approach still the right fit for your future?

Risk isn't about being reckless. It's about positioning your portfolio in a way that supports your life journey, through inevitable ups and downs, with confidence. That's why it's important to distinguish between risk tolerance (how much risk feels comfortable) and risk capacity (how much risk you can afford based on your goals and circumstances). Good advice balances both.

Strategic focus

Still, even the most seasoned investors can fall prey to behavioural biases. Fear of loss, overreacting to market headlines, or focusing too heavily on recent events (known as recency bias) can lead to costly decisions. Many investors let emotion, rather than strategy, shape their actions.

That's where we come in. We help you stay objective, structured and focused on your evolving goals. Our advice cuts through the noise, replaces fear with clarity and ensures your strategy adapts as your life changes. We're here to help you invest with purpose – not emotion. We'll work with you to build a resilient strategy that reflects who you are now, and where you want to go.

Investing isn't just about numbers – it's about you – and getting the risk balance right is key to your long-term success.



Supporting generations – helping family without compromising your financial future

Many are familiar with the ‘Bank of Mum and Dad’ (BoMaD) as a vital source of support for younger homebuyers, but a new trend is emerging. Recent research⁹ shows that one in eight high earners are also stepping into the role of the ‘Bank of Son and Daughter’ (BoSaD), helping their parents manage the rising cost of living and other financial pressures, as well as supporting their own children.

The squeeze in the middle

The study highlights a growing shift in how wealth is shared across generations. While 73% of high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) provide financial support to adult children, 68% also assist older family members. For 12%, that means simultaneously supporting both parents and children – a financial double duty.

The average financial gift from these generous supporters sits at around £7,500 annually, but while the intention is admirable, the impact can be significant. Over one in seven HNWIs have had to adjust their financial plans to accommodate family support. Some have even drawn from their pension savings, sold investments, or reduced their lifestyle spending to help those in need.

Finding financial balance

Supporting loved ones doesn’t have to mean sacrificing your own financial future. Striking the right balance is key. With the right financial advice, you can provide meaningful help to family while protecting your own long-term goals. To maximise your support for loved ones, while ensuring your own continued financial freedom, get in touch; we can guide you through your options.

⁹*Saltus Wealth Index, 2025*

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