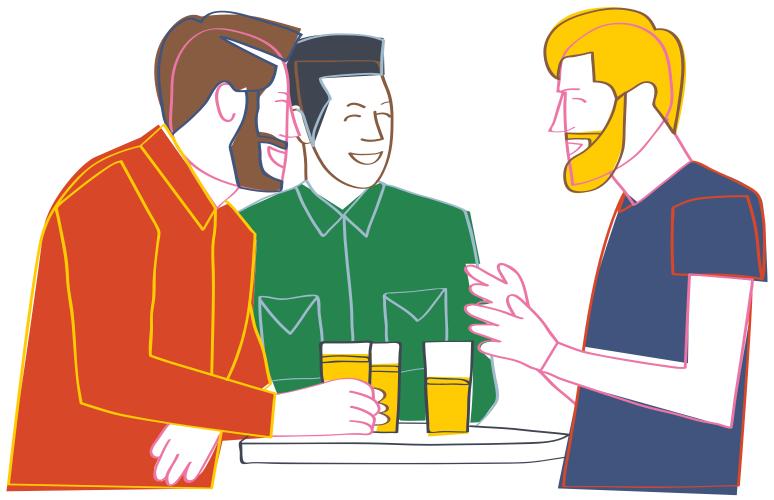
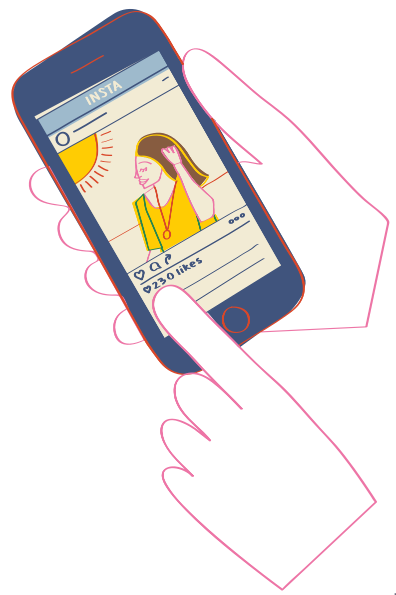
JM FINN

Wealth across the generations

Featured articles

Generational Demographics





Enjoying wealth throughout your lifetime

Health and wealth are often considered to be the primary drivers of an individual's satisfaction. Of course this is very subjective but generally being in control of one's wealth, or at least having a sense of understanding, offers a degree of life security.

At JM Finn we are not doctors so we are not going to opine on things medical, although we do believe that, like wealth, one's health is an area that the great majority still wish to discuss on a private, face to face basis. Yes, we can research the symptoms online, but when it comes to diagnosis, prevention and/or cure, we turn to the professionals. Likewise our wealth.

Of course, wealth means different things to different people and there's little commonality in what determines wealth. Typically the different attitudes can be attributed to different age groups; conveniently, the generations are now labelled, giving the media ample opportunity to make sweeping generalisations about different age cohorts in today's world of bite-sized media consumption.

It is generally accepted that there are differing attitudes towards all manner of subjects, not just money and wealth, across the ages. These changes are attributed to three key facets: economics, technology and attitudes to parenting.

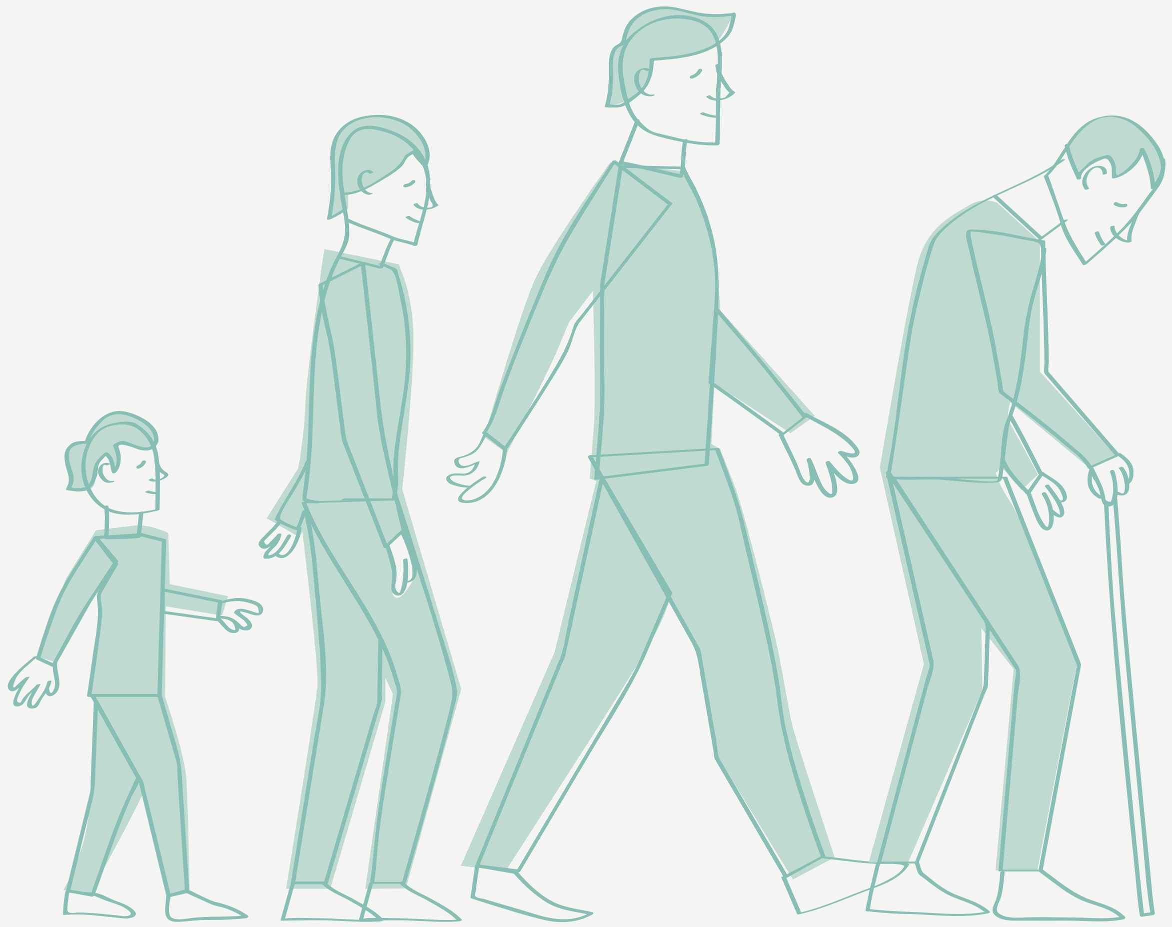
Economics and technology are obvious areas of difference – if we think of the contrast between our parents' and our children's economic situations and use of technology, it's clear that these could influence our outlook on life.

In this report we have identified some of the wealth challenges that may exist specifically for the different generations. With individual case studies alongside some suggestions at specific areas to look we hope this report might spark some intra-family conversations, which, as Associate Wealth Planner Charles Barrow discusses, is critical for a harmonious solution to putting together a wealth plan.

With the huge popularity of the 2015 pension reforms, the extent to which younger generations are locked out of the housing market and the increasing costs of long term care, there are challenges aplenty across the generations. The first move in meeting these challenges is identifying them and then discussing the options with a professional. Our goal is to facilitate and encourage sensible planning to ensure you can enjoy your wealth throughout your lifetime.

Bridging the gap

Author
Anna Murdock
Head of Wealth Planning



Wealth across the generations

In many respects, intergenerational wealth challenges follow a tried and tested path. After all, each of us is at the mercy of the same economic environment, the same vagaries and challenges of the tax system and a shared overriding desire to safeguard our own financial future. From planning ahead to a secure retirement, to navigating the wealth of investment options available and to thinking through possible succession planning choices, these are issues facing us all regardless of our age.

Although surveys suggest a sense of confidence about what the future holds financially, a large percentage of us are worried what will happen when we retire. The shared view, regardless of age, seems to be that there will be a diminished standard of living in retirement. And with so many political and economic uncertainties currently affecting all of us, the importance of planning ahead financially has never been more important.

External factors aside, the challenges of passing on wealth to subsequent generations are not to be sniffed at. Family conflict over inheritance is on the rise, and it is estimated that up to 10,000 people in the UK dispute Wills each year[1]. Furthermore, according to research, half of UK adults do not have a Will[2], which further increases the likelihood of ambiguity and ensuing arguments.

9 in 10

Families lose some wealth by the third generation

Similarly, given our increasingly ageing population, 38% of people are not on track for even a minimum retirement lifestyle[3] which makes a national pensions crisis seem inevitable. Clearly there is much to be done.

While shared pain-points prevail, what is also true is that each generation is distinctly different and clearly characterised by the events of the world in which they were raised, so much so that it's not surprising that we struggle to communicate across the gaps that lie between us.

10,000

People in the UK dispute Wills each year

From the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers, to Generations X, Y and Z, the enormous diversity in attitudes towards life and money in the face of very different life and financial challenges have far-reaching implications for investment decisions and wealth planning. How you manage your hard-earned cash, how optimistic you feel about your investments and your attitude to low interest rates, even how often you check your bank accounts are all heavily influenced by your age and experience.

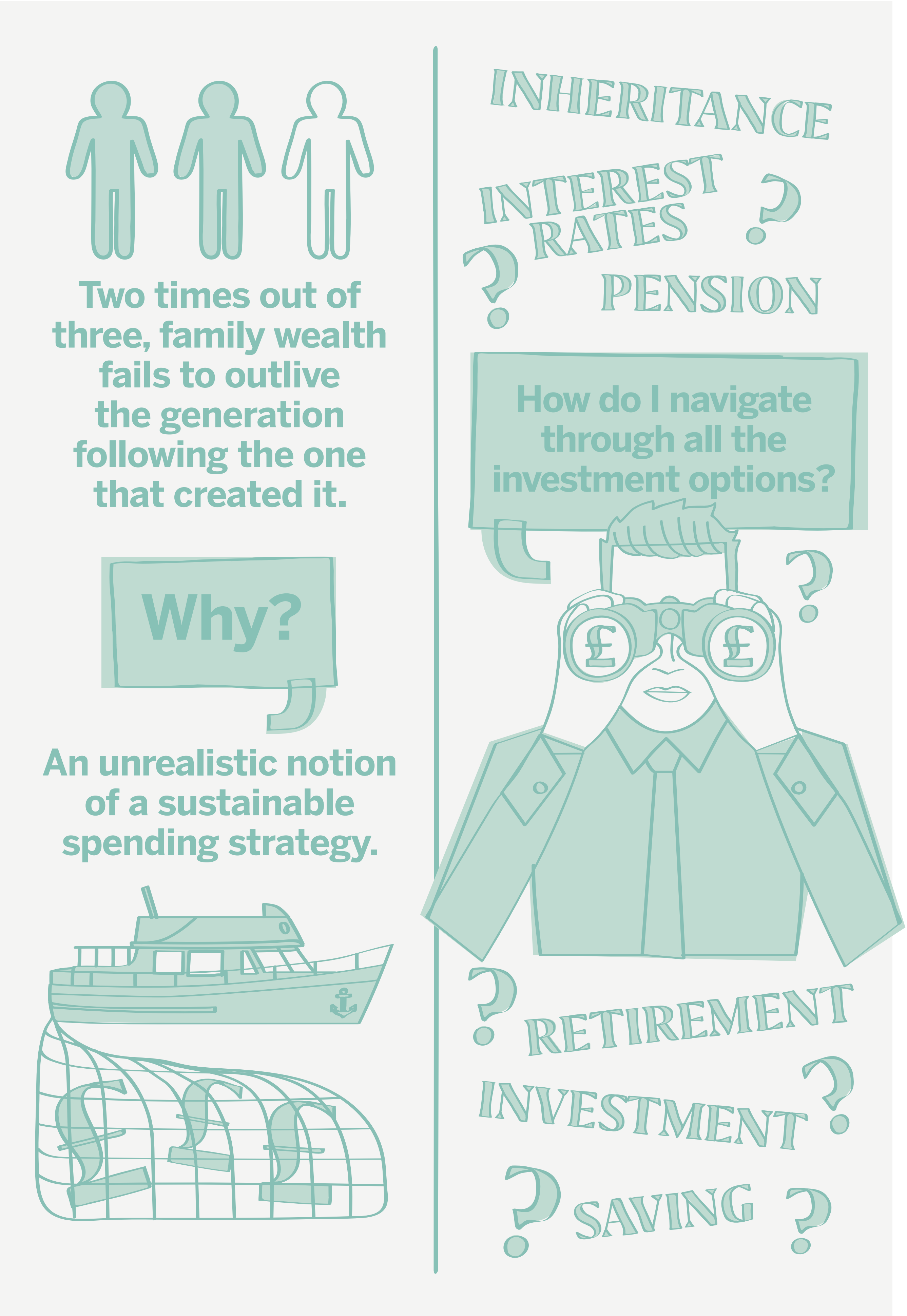
Studies have found a surprising gap in investor behaviour based on the generation we belong to[4]. It seems that the younger you are as an investor, the more aggrieved you probably feel in general – indeed the nation's youngest adults, along with Generation X, feel particularly hard done by when it comes to financial luck.

But this isn't just about whether you have been around to take advantage of economic cycles or even how you vote. Investment habit trends stem from both our different experiences, and also the fact that financial goals change as individuals move through the various stages of their lives.

At the same time, we're seeing a strong increase in "generational" wealth management, fuelled in part by rising property values, expectations of a changing tax regime and a desire to ensure that wealth is transferred and managed effectively. Most wealthy individuals want to make their money last not just for their own lives, but for generations to come. Data shows that 7 in 10 families lose wealth by the second generation, while 9 in 10 lose some of their wealth by the third generation[5].

This is partly because many people have unrealistic notions about what constitutes a sustainable spending strategy. Many people believe a portfolio could last forever with an annual distribution rate of 6% or more. In reality, even for the wealthiest families, true wealth sustainability may require an average distribution rate as low as 2% per year.

The simplest way to pass on assets is to gift them to children during your lifetime, using exemptions under inheritance tax rules. But how do you safeguard against the relatively high incidence of divorce and the potential for gifted assets to form part of a divorce settlement, not to mention spendthrift children? Ultimately good planning forms the bedrock of a successful wealth management strategy, taking into consideration the plethora of issues affecting people at different stages in their life. ■



Traditionalists, the 'Silent Generation':

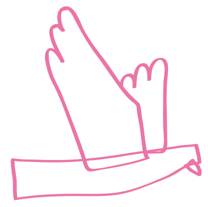
Pre-1945

#1

As the wealthiest elderly generation ever seen, ‘Traditionalists’ face unique financial challenges as they balance lifestyle with the implications of their longevity.

Traditionalists, the ‘Silent Generation’:

Pre-1945



Being old has never been so great – the silent generation is living in expensive houses, going on holidays to die for and, apparently, still enjoying an active love life. But while their own finances may be in rude health, the financial turmoil being experienced by their relatively impoverished children and grandchildren is a source of stress not helped by a tax system that complicates transfers of income between generations.

> **They were lucky to enjoy almost full employment and prosperity in their later life.**

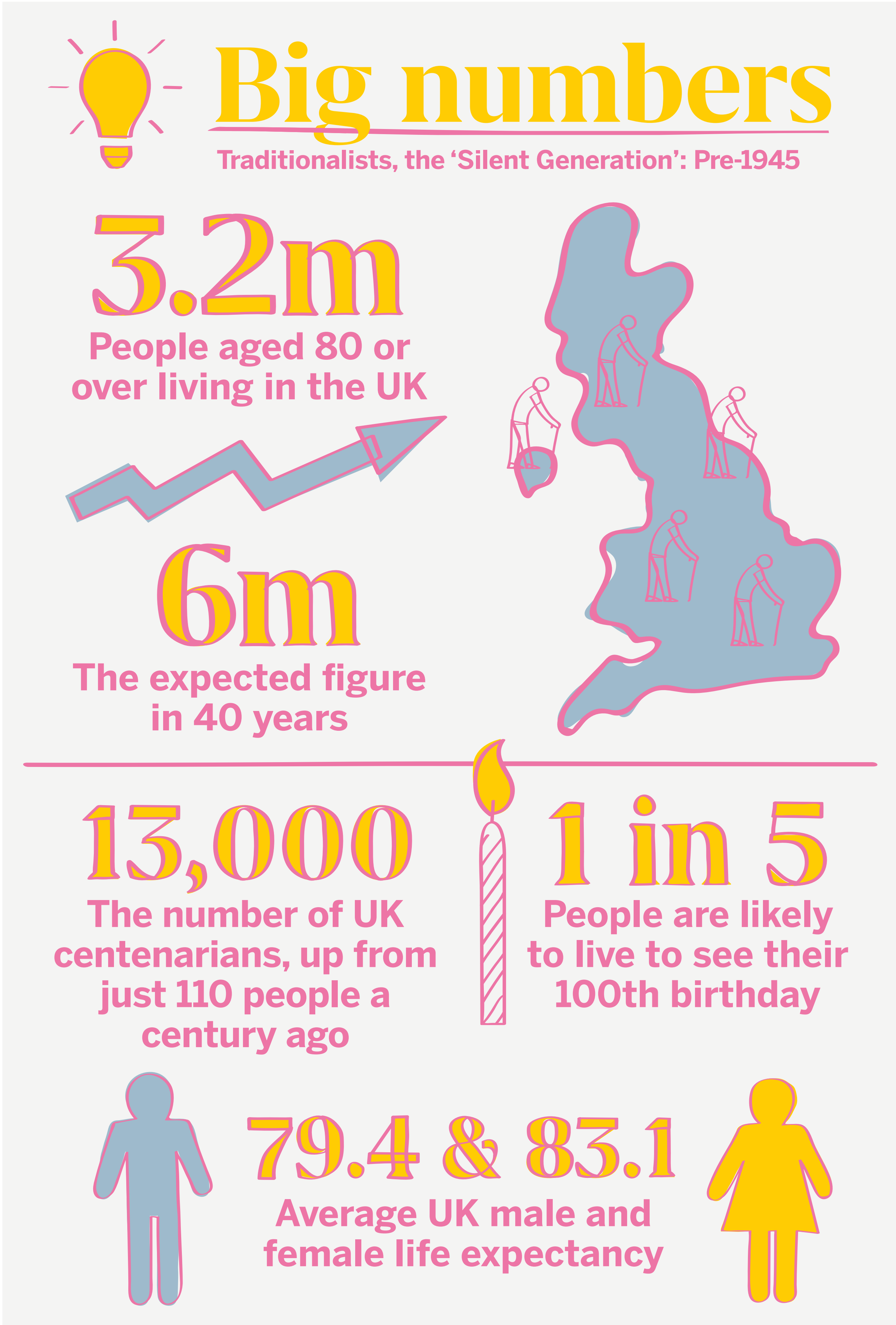
JM Finn Investment | Wealth

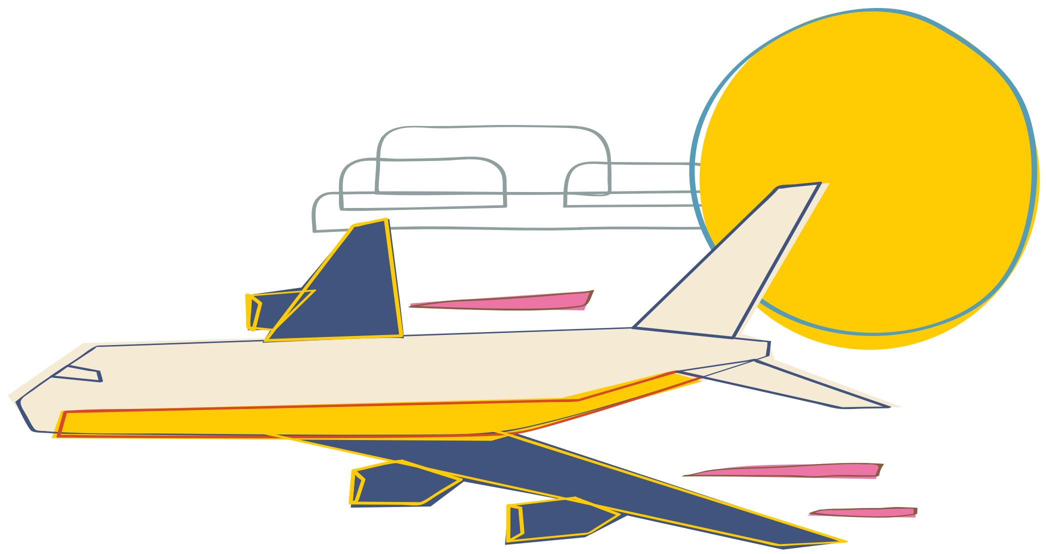
> They were relatively small in number and yet made the biggest generational leaps in education, affluence and life expectancy in history.

Those born between 1928 and 1945 were dubbed "The Lucky Few" by American historian and economist Neil Howe because they were relatively small in number and yet made the biggest generational leaps in education, affluence and life expectancy in history. Their childhood and youth may have been shaped by war and economic depressions but they were lucky to enjoy almost full employment and prosperity in their later life with the post-war economic boom of the 1950s.

Their diversified approach to investing, rebounding share and home values and good savings habits, has made them the richest old generation we've ever seen. Another empirical explanation for their considerable assets is the ageing population and the fact that large numbers of Silent Generation members are living to ripe old ages.

There are now 3.2 million people aged 80 or over living in the UK and this figure is predicted to double to 6 million in the next 40 years[6]. The number of UK centenarians has also risen dramatically: nearly one in five people are likely to live to see their 100th birthday.





Not surprisingly, healthcare provision is increasingly high on the agenda.

While staying in the comfort and familiar surroundings of your home may be the preferable option as you move into later life, the cost of home care, even at a basic level, is high. The annual cost of live in care in your own home can range from £46,800 to £104,000, - so with life expectancy hitting 79.4 years for men and 83.1 years for women according to The Office for National Statistics, the financial implications of care are a serious consideration. However, restructuring wealth can help maximise income to cover care home fees, while maintaining capital tax-efficiently will improve the inheritance position.

Traditionalists face their own unique financial challenges. While most are fiscally conservative and are among the lucky few to receive lifetime pensions, they value their lifestyle and independence and underestimate the implications of their longevity. Although it is worth noting that among many couples from this generation, one spouse is generally responsible for the family finances and when the financially-savvy spouse falls ill or passes away, dealing with the fallout of often complex financial situations can become a major challenge.

Despite coming into prosperity in their later life, benefitting from the housing boom and large pension payouts, traditionalists are not large spenders; perhaps as a result of their waste-not, want-not mentality.

A major source of stress is how to pass on that wealth to following generations in the most tax-efficient way. That said, many routinely pay for extended family holidays or subsidise their grown-up Baby Boomer or Generation X-er children. Many have also set up trust funds for their grandchildren.

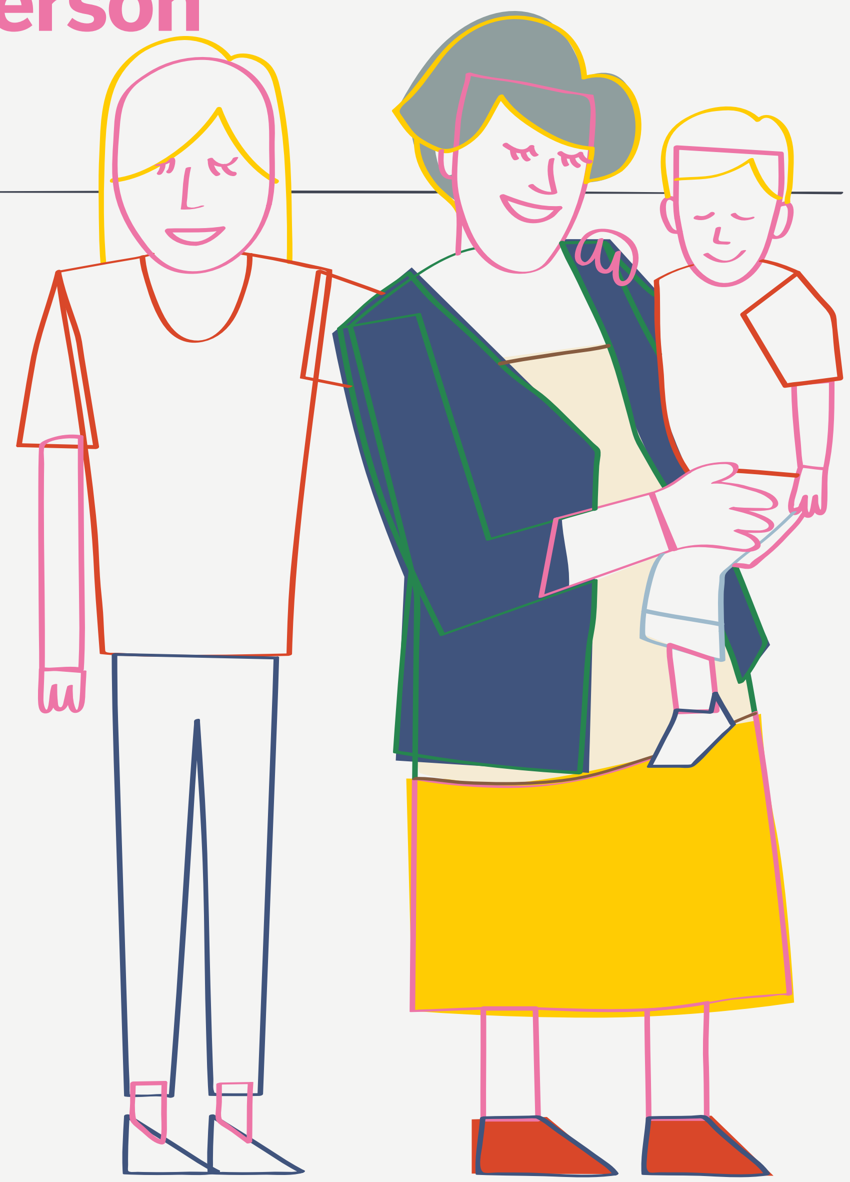
There are questions over the investment vehicles most likely to generate decent returns to sustain their lifestyles. That said, many among the Silent Generation feel particularly lucky with their cash.

Case Study:

Ruth Sanderson

What are my longer term options for health care?

Ruth Sanderson, aged 78 and widowed, continues to live independently at home but more recently some minor health issues have led her to think longer term about her options for care. She would like to stay in the area close to her two children and their families, with whom she has a close relationship.



While keen to remain at home for as long as possible, she is happy to consider a local care home and is keen to explore the other options available to her including care at home. Is one approach more tax efficient than another, she wonders? Initial research suggests that Ruth's care home fees will start at around £54,000 a year. She wonders what would be the best way of covering the shortfall in care costs from her pension without necessarily dipping into her savings.

The family home was recently valued at around £1.2m and she receives an annual pension of around £50,000. She would like to leave as much as possible to her two children and is keen to explore her options for maximising their inheritance.

Ruth contributes to the private school fees of her three grandchildren and is keen to ensure that there is money in the pot to pay for university for all three, should the need arise. What is the most tax-efficient way of putting money to one side for them?

In the meantime, Ruth loves to travel and spends around 10 weeks of the year abroad. Historically her savings have funded her lifestyle but more recently have failed to give her much of a return. Is it worth looking to alternative investment vehicles at this stage of her life? She has a small share portfolio and life assurance based trusts set up by her late husband but hasn't paid any attention to it since he died almost 10 years ago.

Top Tips — Traditionalists, the 'Silent Generation': Pre-1945

Anna Murdock
Head of Wealth Planning

1. To maximise her legacy and benefit her children she should consider mitigating her inheritance tax liability, possibly by utilising gift allowances. It can make sense to maximise all the tax free investing options such as investing in JISAs on behalf of her grandchildren

2. To ensure she has enough cover for the care home fees, should she need it, it's worth assessing all her financial affairs to check they are in order and to fund the care costs from the optimal source

3. Ensuring a Will and Power of Attorney are in place can help her beneficiaries, as will talking to them about her plans

4. To ensure that the trusts will still meet their original objectives, trust deeds should be reviewed by a legal professional. Replacement or additional trustees may need to be added to mirror the executors and/or attorneys appointed

Baby Boomers:
1945-1960s

#2

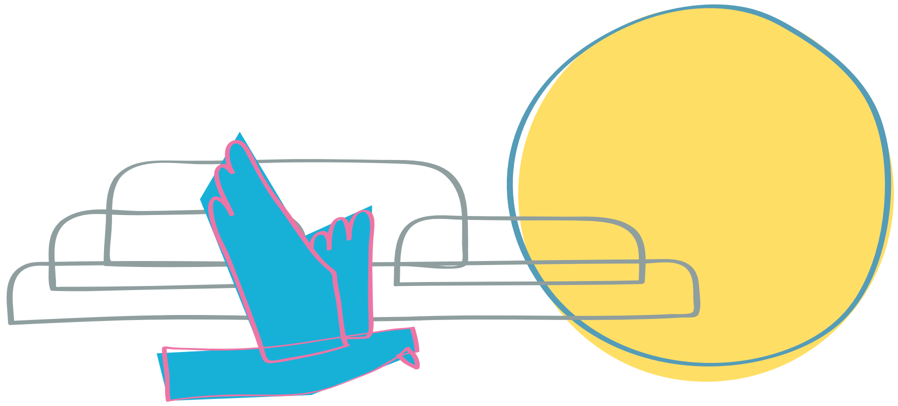
Rising healthcare costs and taxes are prompting even the wealthiest Baby Boomers to question whether they will outlive their money.

Baby Boomers:

1945-1960s

The Baby Boomers may have been shaking their thing in the carefree 1960s, but fast forward fifty years and the financial prospects they face as retirees could hardly be described as easy.

Wealth across the generations



Born in the years following the Second World War, the oldest boomers are in their late 70s today. But as this age group inches closer towards or settles into retirement, a slew of financial, health, and economic challenges are starting to plague many in the generation.

The post-war period may have lulled many into a false sense of security about their longer term financial prospects. Basking in the optimism following the aftermath of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall, they were the first generation to benefit from cradle to grave welfare provision.

At the same time, the combination of better healthcare and improved living conditions has resulted in a fall in mortality rates in the long term, albeit with a decline during the onset of the pandemic in 2020[7]. But the ageing population brings with it another set of challenges — and for this demographic in particular represents a veritable source of anxiety about retirement.

> Against a backdrop of rising healthcare costs and taxes, Baby Boomers worry about outliving their money.

Wealth across the generations

> Ensuring they have sustainable financial strategies to maintain their lifestyle is essential for Baby Boomers.

Even wealthy Baby Boomers worry about outliving their money, against a backdrop of rising healthcare costs and taxes. Regardless of their income level, most wish to go into retirement maintaining whatever lifestyle they had become accustomed to. However, making best use of that second home in the sun comes with a host of hidden costs, not least property taxes, insurance and travel. Therefore, ensuring they have sustainable financial strategies to maintain their lifestyle is essential for this demographic.

As if their own retirement plans weren't enough of a preoccupation, some also face the prospect of caring for elderly parents —and the financial and emotional costs that those caring responsibilities entail. Concerns include the cost of nursing homes or at home care, or even considering having their parents live with them as they get older.

Just as Baby Boomers need to make plans for their parents, they will also need to plan ahead and think about who will be taking care of them as they get older, whether it's devising a plan with their children, or putting money to one side for help at home.

Big numbers

Baby Boomers: 1945-1960s

Late 70s

The age of the oldest Baby Boomers

7.8 & 5.8 years

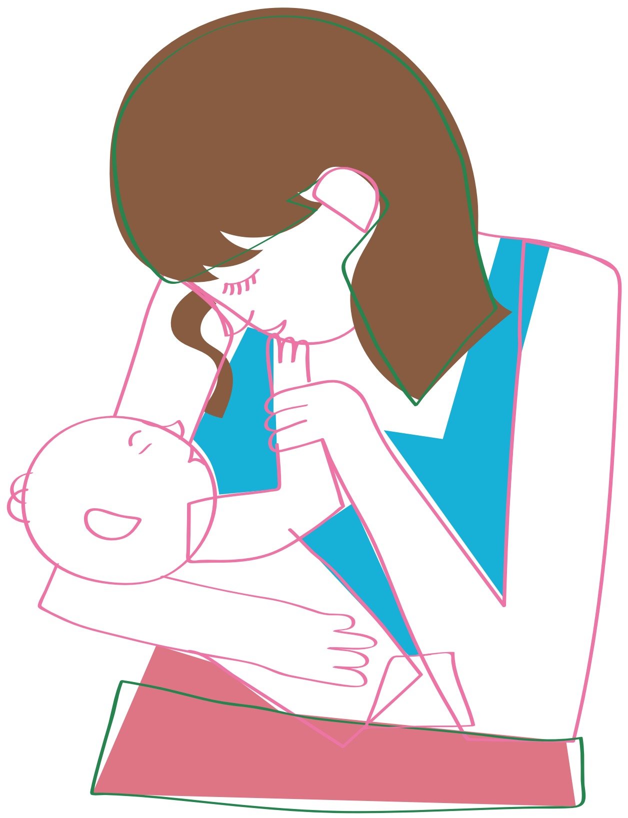
The amount that life expectancy for men and women rose by from 1982 to 2022

£2.3tn

The huge, unearned and largely tax-free housing wealth windfall, created by Britain's pre-crash property boom

What's almost certainly true is that the economic roller coaster ride they have experienced since the post war years has undoubtedly had a deep-rooted impact on attitudes to finances – and there's an overriding sense that Baby Boomers want life to be easier for their children.

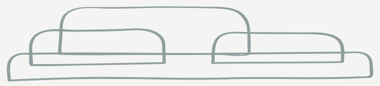
Think tank The Resolution Foundation found that "unexpected and likely unrepeatable property and pensions windfalls" had disproportionately benefited older Baby Boomers, born in the decade following the Second World War. Britain's pre-crash property boom created a huge, unearned and largely tax-free £2.3tn housing wealth windfall for those lucky enough to be homeowners at the time. But while the property bubble hugely benefited many of Britain's Baby Boomers, it has also driven generational wealth progress into reverse by pricing younger people out of home ownership. ■



Baby Boomers want life to be easier for their children.

Case Study:

Giles and Mary



68-year-old retired surveyor Giles and his wife Mary recently downsized from their sizeable family house in the Home Counties to a smaller property with a slightly more manageable garden just five miles down the road, allowing them to release some of the gains they have enjoyed thanks to a buoyant property market.

While their own finances are in rude health, the couple are looking at ways to ease the financial burden on their children. Both of them now live close, boasting five grandchildren, all now of secondary school age. They offer more than just emotional support to their offspring as the couple also pay school fees for their grandchildren and are keen to look at other tax-efficient ways to pass on their wealth as the children grow up.

They have a small portfolio of properties that they rent out to supplement Giles' final salary pension. He also has a share portfolio but a lacklustre performance over the past few years has put question marks over his investment strategy. Is there a better way to invest the couple's money that would yield a better return to sustain them in retirement, he asks?

Both are currently in good health, and investment in private medical insurance gives them peace of mind for the future that any health issues will be dealt with swiftly. Giles drafted a Will ten years ago but it has not been updated since and he is keen to explore his options regarding Power of Attorney.

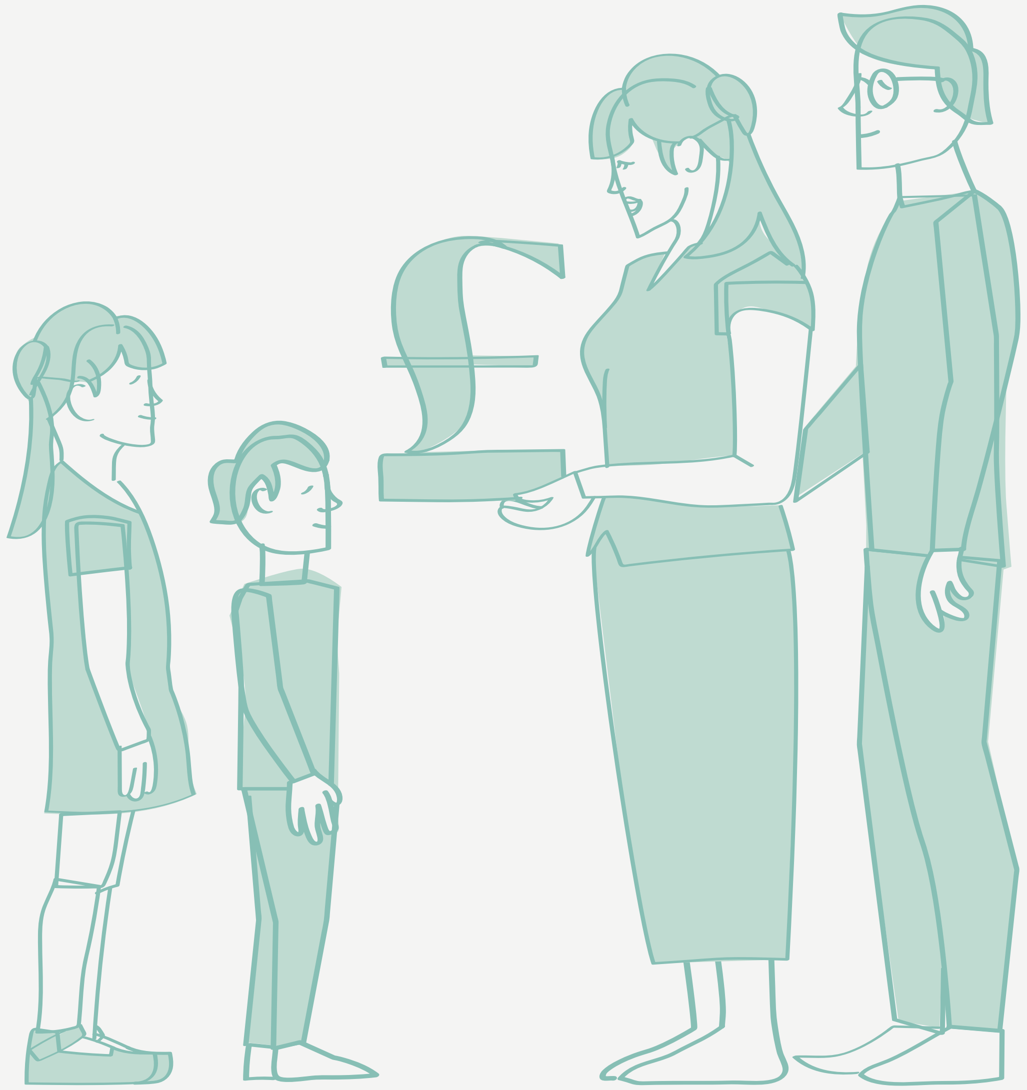
Giles' parents are no longer alive and although Mary's 91-year-old mother continues to live independently, some health issues are encouraging the family to consider the best way forward for her long-term care.

Top Tips —— Baby Boomers: 1945-1960s

Simon Wong
Senior Wealth Planner

1. First and foremost, Giles and Mary should update their Wills
2. Looking into the options surrounding Power of Attorney will give some peace of mind
3. If there are concerns about the investment strategy and/or recent performance it might be sensible to ask a discretionary manager to review the portfolio and discuss the options thereafter, as looking after a portfolio oneself is time consuming
4. It is worth considering an inheritance tax mitigating portfolio service – as experienced investors they might be comfortable with the risks whilst keeping the portfolio outside of their estate for inheritance tax purposes

Estate Planning



Author
Charles Barrow
Associate Wealth Planner, JM Finn

While it is often considered a taboo topic to discuss financial matters with your immediate family, we believe it should not be, and we want to normalise the need for these conversations to occur sooner rather than later – especially when approaching the later stages of your life.

Prior to having these conversations, it is sensible to consider the following:

Who do you want to receive the assets?
What do you want them to receive?
When do you want them to receive the assets?

The reason we believe conversations are particularly important is that you may have spent decades accruing the assets only for them to be 'lost' on death because of family, beneficiaries or trustees not having complete knowledge of the assets. This is validated by research[8] that shows an estimated £15billion of assets are currently lying unclaimed in UK accounts of deceased persons.

In the modern era, the use of paper statements and hard copies of documents has diminished and the paper trail to track down assets has become more difficult than ever. This further enhances the need for conversations to occur to ensure at least one party, whether that be a family member or financial professional, has a holistic understanding of your financial position.

While we advocate these conversations, we also note that it is also important to ensure that they are handled in the appropriate manner. This may mean not disclosing specific details such as your intended beneficiaries or monetary values to avoid possible family rifts.

£15bn

of assets are currently lying unclaimed in UK accounts of deceased persons

Putting plans in place early

As stated above, your estate is often a cumulation of assets accrued over the entirety of your life and, where possible, people tend to prefer to mitigate the effect Inheritance Tax (IHT) would have by putting plans in place and commencing IHT planning as soon as possible.

Typically, the most common form of transfer of capital is a gift to children which is known as a Potentially Exempt Transfer or "PET". Once this is given, a 7-year clock commences. Only after the 7 years have elapsed will the gift be determined to be fully out of your estate (although there is the benefit of tapering relief), so such thinking about this at an earlier stage in life may be appropriate to avoid it being retrospectively included back in the estate for inheritance tax purposes.

IHT mitigation

While there are several ways to mitigate an IHT liability, some of the more popular routes currently available are as follows:

Pension products – A change in the Autumn Budget is that from April 2027, assets held in pension products are going to be included in your estate for the purposes of IHT.

Gifts / gifting allowances – removes assets from your estate which ultimately would have been liable to IHT if retained. There are allowances / exemptions as follows:

- An annual gifting allowance of £3,000 per annum to one individual. The allowance can be carried forward to the subsequent fiscal year, if unused.
- Gifts up to the value of £250 to as many individuals as you like.
- Gifts out of surplus income, subject to being proven that it does not affect your standard of living.
- Charitable donations – removing assets from your estate for philanthropical purposes.
- Trust structures – removing assets from your estate into purpose-built structures, which reduce the size of your estate liable to IHT. It should be noted that not all trust structures will be considered exempt from your estate.

IHT taxation
IHT is levied at 40% on all assets included in your estate, net of any available nil rate band and residential nil rate bands. However, it is possible to reduce the figure to 36% if you leave 10% or more of your estate to charity.

There are some notable assets which are potentially exempt from IHT and would reduce the value of your estate:

Businesses - depending on how a business is owned and the type of business, you may be able to obtain either 50% or 100% inheritance tax relief on the business assets. It is possible for these assets to have been passed on while the owner was alive or as part of the distribution of the estate through the Will, but the business must have been owned for at least two years before death. This is known as Business Relief.

Agricultural property — you can pass on a farm free from inheritance tax if it meets certain conditions. This is known as Agricultural Relief. Some particular assets however, such as farm machinery, are not exempt from tax. From April 2026, the 100% rate of relief will apply to the first £1 million and will be 50% thereafter.

Woodland Property – woodlands used for commercial purposes could get up to 100% Business Relief.

Heritage assets – This generally only applies to stately homes, land of outstanding natural beauty, or famous works of art. There are certain conditions that must be met to get this relief.

It is worth bearing in mind that areas that could be subject to change include pension allowances, capital gains tax rates and IHT, all of which would impact any planning. For further information, please speak to a member of our Wealth Planning team.

Generation X:

1960s-1980s

#3

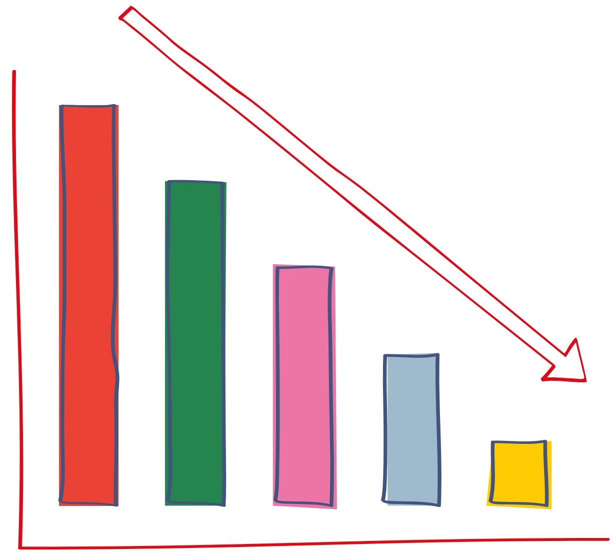
A career-focussed generation beset by financial concerns about everything from school fees to retirement planning, they were hit hardest by the financial crisis.

Generation X:

1960s – 1980s

On paper at least, Generation X-ers are in the prime of life with everything to look forward to. And yet as they juggle the demands of family, work and trying to find the time to enjoy their limited downtime, it's no wonder that many find themselves overwhelmed and under pressure.

"A career-focussed generation overloaded with financial concerns."

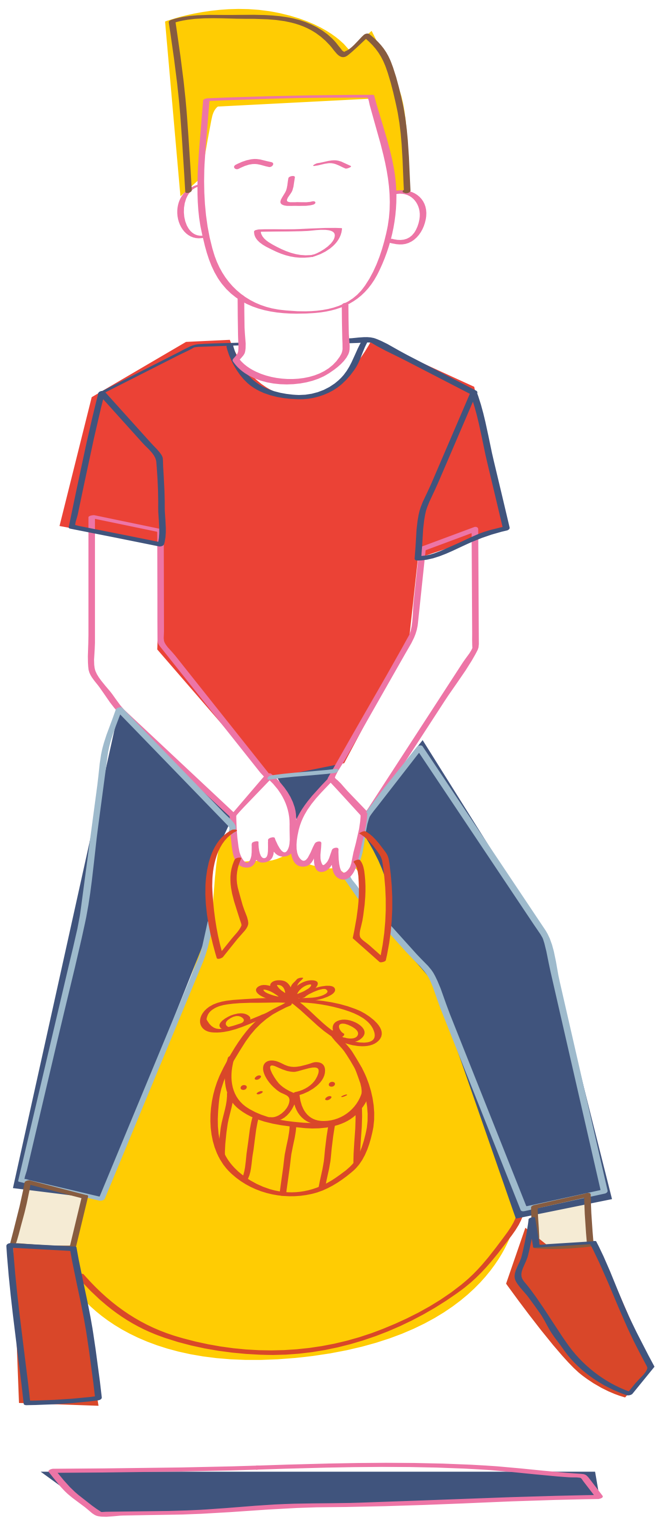


Having grown up as the first generation with the possibility of entirely free education and against the optimistic backdrop of Britpop and Cool Britannia, Gen X-ers, this demographic of individuals born between 1960 and 1980, were the last generation able to benefit from the property boom. Money was cheap, the economy was booming.

The financial downturn hit Generation X-ers' wealth hardest, with much of it locked in property, the value of which nosedived during the crisis. Although values have recovered since then, their wealth will take a considerable time to reach the levels achieved by the previous generation – the Baby Boomers - mainly due to the generation's small size.

Since the credit crunch, this career-focussed generation has been overloaded with financial concerns during what is arguably the toughest phase of life: kids at home, a mortgage, perhaps not yet in peak earning years. In fact, studies suggest that the busy child-rearing years tend to be the unhappiest of our life, plagued by concerns about providing for children and the growing cost of school fees.

“The last generation able to benefit from the property boom. Money was cheap, the economy was booming.”



Big numbers

Generation X: 1960s-1980s

1st

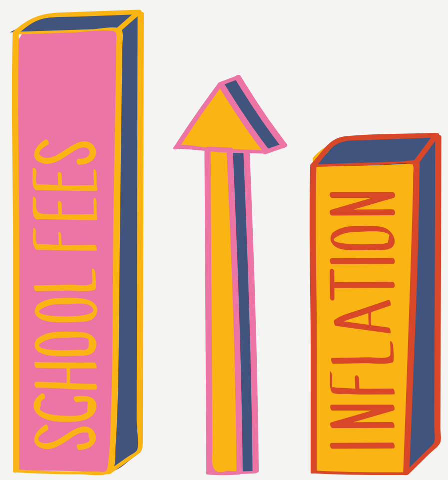
Generation to grow up with the possibility of free university education

40s

Are when most Generation X-ers put money aside for retirement

£6,000

The average that school fees have risen to per term, more than the rate of inflation



News that average school fees have risen by more than the rate of inflation to an average of more than £6,000 a term according to the Independent Schools Council's latest annual census, will be all too familiar to those writing the cheques. From January 2025, VAT will be applied at the standard rate of 20% to private school fees. In addition, from April 2025, the government plans to remove charitable business rates relief for private schools in England, so that private schools will be required to pay their full business rates liability. It's expected that most schools will pass the cost on to fee-paying parents. For those with offspring of university age, there's the prospect of university choices and more fees to throw into the mix. No surprise then that mid-life crises typically hit at this age.

In addition to taking care of their own children and wanting to provide for them in the future in the form of an inheritance, this generation is reaching the age where the demands of supporting their now-ageing parents are starting to kick in, prompting the label the "sandwich generation." It is also fuelling the prevailing feeling among Generation X-ers that they're shouldering far more financial responsibilities than their parents did.

It's also at this time of life that people are most likely to be exposed to significant financial life events, not least

divorce and redundancy. And with the prospect of being able to push back and enjoy retirement still a significant way off, it can all feel like something of a slog.

Generation X-ers know that planning for retirement is important because they've seen the challenges facing their parents, but there is a widespread tendency to procrastinate when it comes to putting enough money aside for later in life.

And more worryingly, the evidence suggests most are inclined to keep deferring until well into their 40s or even later. For Generation X, retirement planning is on the 'to-do' list for most, but there is a worrying tendency to either procrastinate or worse still, never get around to it.

Even though they intend to work longer than their predecessors, those in the Gen X crowd expect their retirement work to be more flexible, fulfilling and rewarding by providing them with a greater purpose as well as social interaction.

Case Study:

Richard

Entrepreneur Richard describes himself as a risk positive investor but admits that financial planning hasn't always been as high on the agenda as it perhaps should have been. Now in his late-40s, he is keen to explore ways to maximise returns and explore the various financial options open to him.

After benefitting hugely from house price increases over the years and managing to hang on to properties along the way, Richard and his wife Sally have a small rental property portfolio that in a good year provides an income after expenses of around £30k a year. But they wonder if they are missing a trick when it comes to making the most of their property investments, particularly in the light of changes to tax rules affecting landlords?

Having been self-employed for most of his professional life, Richard only recently started paying into a private pension and he is keen to maximise pension allowances. But with a house build project on the horizon, he is reluctant to tie up capital. What should his strategy be to give him the best returns but with the flexibility to access money at relatively short notice?

At the same time, although he is currently preoccupied with saving for school fees, Richard is also looking ahead to the prospect of the children going to university and wants advice on the best way to set them on the road to financial independence. Despite his own tardiness in setting up a pension, all three children already have pensions that the couple pay into on a monthly basis. Is this the most tax-efficient way to set them up for the future, they wonder? Would gifting them a deposit on a first property make more sense and what are the tax implications of doing so?

Richard has a relatively small share portfolio and enjoys dabbling in the markets via online trading platforms but has never sought any professional advice when it comes to his investments.

Top Tips —— Generation X: 1960s-1980s

Simon Wong
Senior Wealth Planner

1. Having realised the importance of a pension, he might be able to make use of unused pension allowances from previous tax years.

2. Owning rental properties is less attractive from a tax perspective now so it's worth looking at the possibilities of selling one or two and setting up an investment portfolio, making use of both of their tax-free allowances

3. A review of their gifting strategy to the children might be prudent. For example, it might be preferable to invest in ISAs for the children rather than a pension as this would allow them to access it when it came to putting down a deposit on a property

4. Pulling together a wealth plan might help Richard understand how much he needs to set aside in order to ensure he can live a comfortable retirement when the time comes, without compromising his lifestyle

Pensions across the generations: quashing the clichés and some reasons for optimism...

Author
Anna Murdock
Head of Wealth Planning, JM Finn

Whatever your age, we all like to think that other generations have it better. So here, we take a subjective look at three of the generations currently making up the UK's population – from the people mostly in retirement (the baby boomers) through to two of those that are currently in the workplace (generation X and millennials) – and we argue that the generational clichés do not necessarily apply. On a broader level, each generation faces its own ideas and challenges around pensions savings. We also suggest that there is some cause for optimism for those willing to act now. Let's take a look at each generation individually:

Wealth across the generations

Millennials

The financial plight of the millennials has been well-covered by the media. And millennials often gripe that their future wealth has been squandered by the baby boomers, who are now mostly retired. For their part, older people often accuse millennials of living only in the now and being spoiled for choice with life experiences. But amid a swirl of other day-to-day financial concerns, few could deny that spiralling house prices and astronomical rental costs represent a major obstacle to starting pension savings.

One key question is, will there be as big a generational pension gap as millennials fear? Perhaps not. With the government's shift towards 'auto enrolment', employer pensions could well plug some of this potential divide. Pension contributions through auto enrolment look certain to grow, and in its recent report, the Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association (PLSA) says that automatic enrolment will immediately make individuals £2,500 per year better off due to these increased contributions. Plus, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), while in 2012 less than half of UK employees were saving into a pension plan, today 79% are – and this number is growing. While millennials don't account for all of this increase, automatic enrolment is certainly nudging them towards saving for retirement.

However, saving more and having an adequate pension provision – defined by the Pension Commission as two thirds of pre-retirement income – are entirely different matters. So while millennials may well face a tough time, it is a battle that they are becoming increasingly aware of. The same may not be true for their predecessors, the Generation Xers...

Generation X

Straddling some of the biggest shifts in the pension industry, Gen Xers may be the ones that feel the pinch the most. In terms of sheer numbers, Gen-Xers make up a large proportion of the workforce. While some will have been lucky enough to get in on the golden ticket of final salary schemes, millions of others haven't. Instead, government policies designed to get them saving more, prompted by the dwindling generosity of final salary schemes – such as additional voluntary contributions, which put an onus on individuals to save for their own retirement – have fallen short of their aims. According to the Association of Insurance Companies (AIC), close to half of people aged 35 to 55 said that not having enough for retirement was their biggest concern.

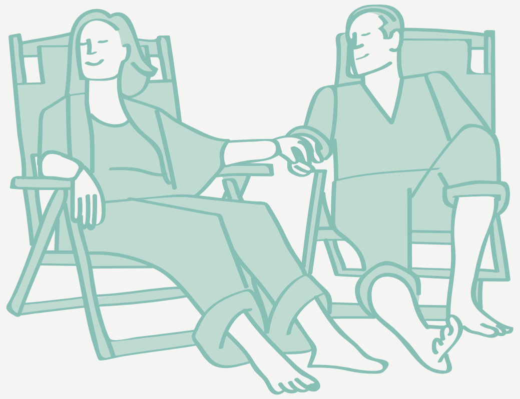
One saving grace for many in this generation is that they managed to get a foot on the property ladder in their earlier adulthood. Of those, many now plan to downsize their home as they approach retirement (or once the children flee the nest) in order to free up some cash to bolster their pensions. In fact, according to the PLSA, almost half of Gen-Xers plan to use property to help finance their retirements.

The Baby Boomers

Younger people might view today's pensioners as being the lucky ones: in addition to having accumulated wealth through housing, many have the luxury of a guaranteed income of final salary schemes. Accordingly, there has been a temptation to point the finger at the baby boomers. It is the baby boomers after all, that gave rise to the expression 'The Bank of Mum and Dad.' The generations that follow them could stand to benefit from some of this accumulated wealth, especially as the new pension freedoms might enable more flexibility around leaving assets for future generations.

However, for every baby boomer that benefits from a generous final salary provision, there will be another falling way short of what they need to live comfortably. Such people might have to work later in life, bursting the traditional dream of that picture-postcard retirement. ONS statistics[9] show that there are nearly one million workers who are aged 65 and above - equivalent to more than one in nine people working beyond the current state pension age. For the less fortunate that do not have adequate provisions and have mistakenly assumed that the state would make up the difference, there is not much time to make up the shortfall – unlike younger generations who are more aware and can benefit from the cumulative effect of investing into pensions early in life.

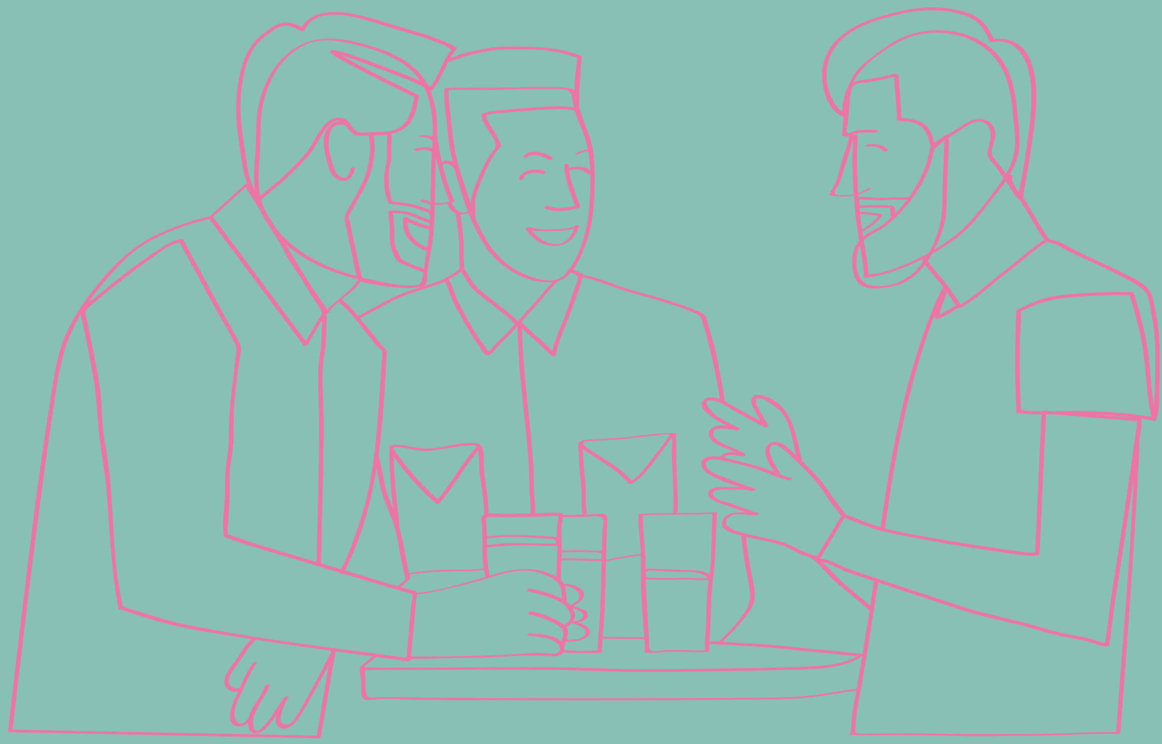
Perhaps the biggest challenge for the pension industry and the government is getting us all to save more towards retirement. Many of us know we should, but this does not always translate directly into action – especially when more pressing financial needs have to be covered.



As useful as the broader categories of different generations can be in highlighting differences, the lessons of intra-generational disparity should spell out that no two people share the same financial circumstances. So, the reality is this: if you are a working adult and you are not sure about whether your current course of retirement provisions will be sufficient to meet your needs, then the chances are you will be off target. So whatever stage of life you are at, doing some form of retirement planning is probably the single most important thing you can do right now to ensure you have enough to retire comfortably. ■

Generation Y, 'The Millennials':

1980s-2000s



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Ignore the media stereotyping, this is the cautious 'Generation Rent' who are taking hands-on investment decisions as they strive for financial freedom.

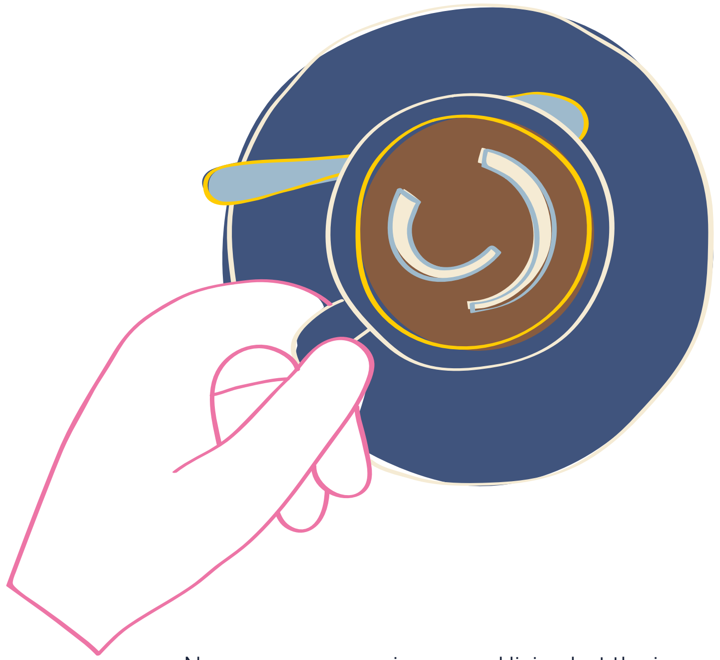
Wealth across the generations

Generation Y, 'The Millennials':

1980s – 2000s

Misunderstood by older generations and vilified by the media, Millennials are now entering the investment scene in earnest. Just like previous generations, their attitude to money and wealth management has been shaped by the experience of the economic downturn – and their reaction could not be more different to their parents or grandparents.

The term 'Millennials' generally applies to individuals who were born after 1980 and reached adulthood at the turn into the 21st century. Millennials were raised during the boom times and relative peace of the 1990s, only to see their sunny world dashed by the September 11 attacks in New York and the global economic downturn. Even though they emerged from the recession unscathed – indeed many of them were still at school at the time – the impact on their attitude towards money and saving has been profound, experts suggest. Theirs is a story of innocence lost.



> **Millennials know how important it is to manage money, but think it's boring and would much rather be socialising, thank you very much.**

Now many are earning a good living but the impact of the crisis and the volatility of the financial markets is evident in how they spend, save and manage their money. In particular, there's evidence that playing it safe, and being risk averse and self-reliant is very much a reaction to seeing their parents and grandparents lose a great deal of net worth during that time.

That cautiousness is partly responsible for delaying property purchases, resulting in the moniker 'generation rent' but also leading them to put off having children. Nonetheless the definition of success among this cohort of successful individuals is the ability to provide for family.

The selfie generation – shaped by technology and supposedly obsessed with social media – has an altogether different attitude to saving; typically, Millennials are far less likely to worry about future financial needs and putting something to one side for the future. Instead, it's much more about living for the day and meeting current expenses. According to recent research by Britain Thinks, a UK-based research and strategy group, Millennials know how important it is to manage money, but think it's boring and would much rather be socialising, thank you very much.

Underlying mistrust in financial institutions as a result of the GFC – or great financial crisis, an acronym most likely to appeal to younger media consumers – and

Big numbers

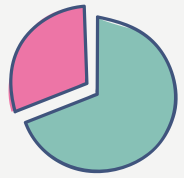
Generation Y, 'The Millennials': 1980s-2000s

1980

'Millennials' generally applies to individuals born after this year

25%

Of millennials do not think they will ever be able to retire



70%

Are not investing enough to provide for a comfortable retirement

£1,000

The UK Government offer per year as a savings account for those starting under 40

subsequent recession, together with their passion for technology, means many are considering taking investment decisions into their own hands using online investment platforms to play the markets. While returns are the name of the game for this cohort, many refuse to compromise family or personal values when it comes to investment decisions.

The premise of retirement, meanwhile, seems to have shifted from the idea of working for a set amount of time to a far broader concept of financial freedom, whether that be in their 50s, 60s or beyond. Although the introduction of pension auto enrolment has been a massive political success story in terms of getting more people to save for retirement – the latest statistics show that 80% of this age group now regularly pay into some form of pension pot – a certain complacency reigns.

However, the reality is that 70% of them are still not investing nearly enough to provide for a comfortable retirement and far fewer Millennials have their pension pots reviewed, compared with those closer to retirement age. Many simply don't appreciate the scale of the job in hand and that relying on basic auto-enrolment alone just isn't sufficient to fund retirement.

At the same time, many among this generation are unsure as to the best way to save for retirement. In particular, there is widespread confusion over how the benefits of the Lifetime ISA compare to a pension – underlined by the fact that very few providers actually offer one. This is the savings account which must be opened before the age of 40, known as the "LISA", which was launched in April 2017. It offers an attractive 25% bonus from the UK Government, worth up to £1,000 per year which can be used to save for a first home or for retirement.

The precarious nature of the emerging and often criticised gig economy, where freelance and uncontracted work is the norm, goes some way to explaining why their attitude to debt is radically different to their forebears. More risk averse than previous generations, Millennials are far less likely to invest in stocks and shares, instead preferring physical assets and cash.

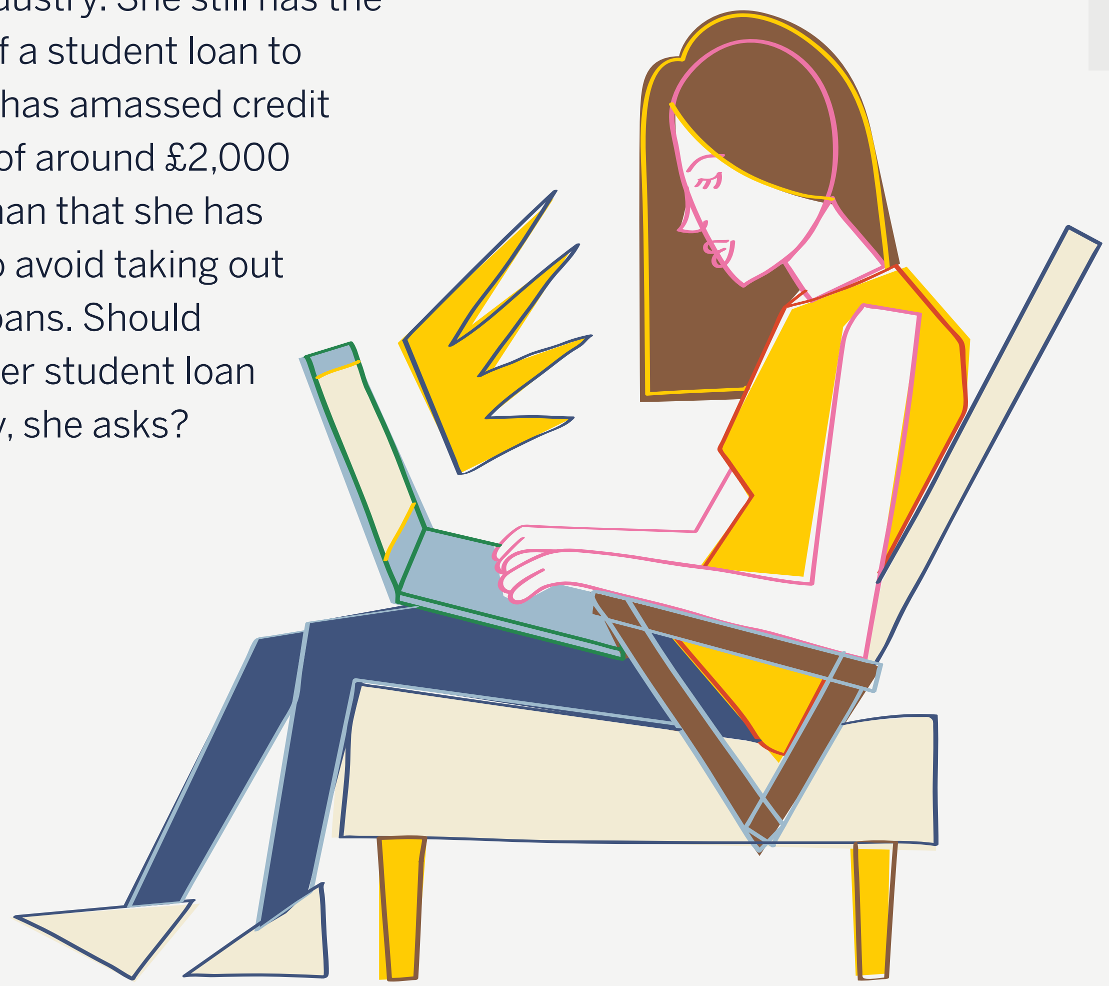
Despite their live and let live attitude, Millennials do have financial concerns and worries about supporting ageing parents and in-laws. They are the generation most concerned with what they will face should they run out of money in their later years, and yet few have actually done anything about it in terms of saving enough for retirement. ■

Case Study:

Sarah

Should paying off her student loan be a priority?

Having graduated from university in 2012, Sarah now works in the software industry. She still has the remnants of a student loan to pay off and has amassed credit card debts of around £2,000 but other than that she has managed to avoid taking out any other loans. Should paying off her student loan be a priority, she asks?



Since auto-enrolment was introduced, Sarah has been paying into a pension set up by her employer but she accepts that current contribution levels are nowhere near enough to provide her with a comfortable retirement. What should her strategy for her pension be, particularly given that she has more pressing financial priorities, in particular property investment?

Sarah is still renting but she is keen to get a foot on the property ladder and her parents have kindly offered to stump up the deposit. She is keen to explore any tax-efficient ways to save for her first home but admits also that enjoying a relatively carefree and single existence is more of a priority at the moment.

She has no other investments and admits to being financially naïve when it comes to the options available to her. She isn't ruling out investing in shares although says ethical and sustainable investments would be a priority.

Top Tips — Generation Y, 'The Millennials': 1980s-2000s

Anna Murdock
Head of Wealth Planning

1. First and foremost, Sarah should review her debt; it's probably more sensible to tackle the credit card payments before the student debt as its likely she's paying more interest on these

2. If she's nervous about committing any more to her pension, she should consider investing in an ISA which is more flexible in terms of accessing the funds, should she need to

3. Ensuring she discusses her plans about buying a property with her parents should be a priority and exploring the most tax-efficient way in which they can gift or loan her the money for the deposit

4. Although she may not yet be in a position to invest, to help her understand the markets and options open to her it's well worth reading up on how to invest and getting the basics under her belt. This will help her feel more in control when the time comes

Generation Z, 'The Centennials':

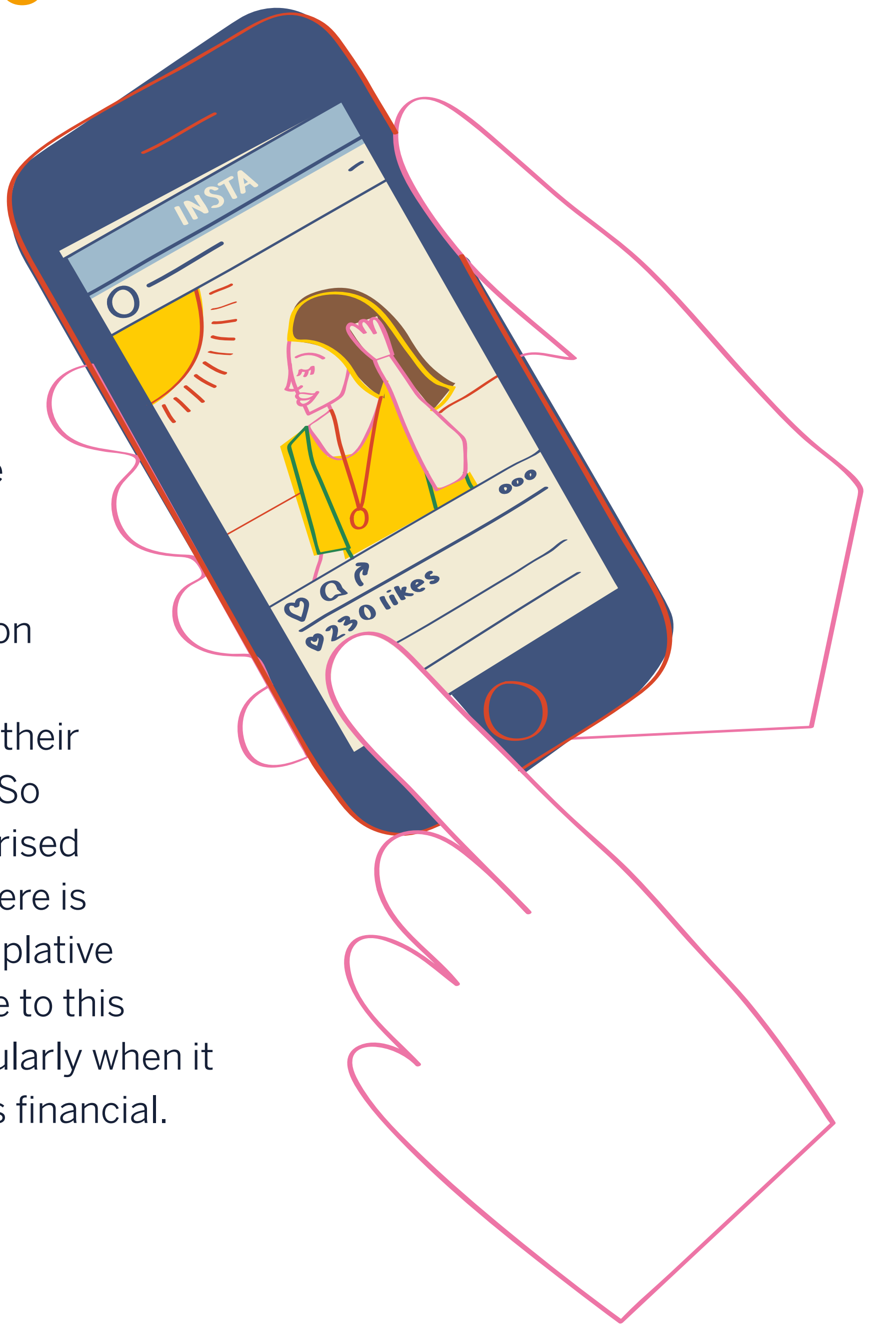
2000-2010s

#5

As they begin their working lives, this optimistic generation looks set to embrace entrepreneurialism while being careful to avoid indebtedness.

Generation Z, 'The Centennials':

Since 2000



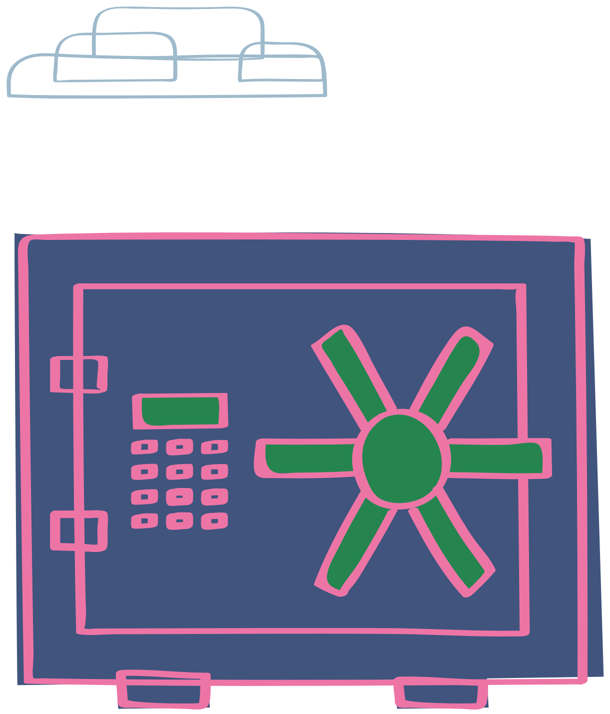
To look at their Instagram feeds, it would be easy to assume that the most pressing concerns plaguing Generation Z-ers hinge on the number of likes of their most recent post. So you might be surprised to discover that there is a far more contemplative and ambitious side to this generation, particularly when it comes to all things financial.

Perhaps as a backlash against the perceived excesses of older generations, Generation Z-ers are more driven by jobs and money than softer goals such as falling in love. Generation Z, otherwise known as the 'Centennials' or 'iGeneration', refers to the generation born after Millennials, from around 2000 to the 2010s, according to most definitions.

A poll conducted by The Open University revealed that almost all (97%) of Centennials are most driven by career and financial goals. Its study also revealed a strong appetite among this demographic for entrepreneurialism and to gain financial independence.

According to the figures, most of the young people polled aspire to start their own business and become financially independent, while other 'softer' life goals such as falling in love (37%), writing a novel (9%), or becoming a reality star (4%) rank the lowest on the priority list. Interestingly, many are already selling services and products through their own creative websites, e-commerce platforms and/or social media.

> Generation Z-ers are more driven by jobs and money than even softer goals such as falling in love.



Centennials put a high priority on saving money.

In addition to avoiding debt like the plague, Centennials put a high priority on saving money. Growing up in the midst of an economic downturn has made them more fiscally cautious than their older counterparts but also more likely to identify as savers rather than spenders.

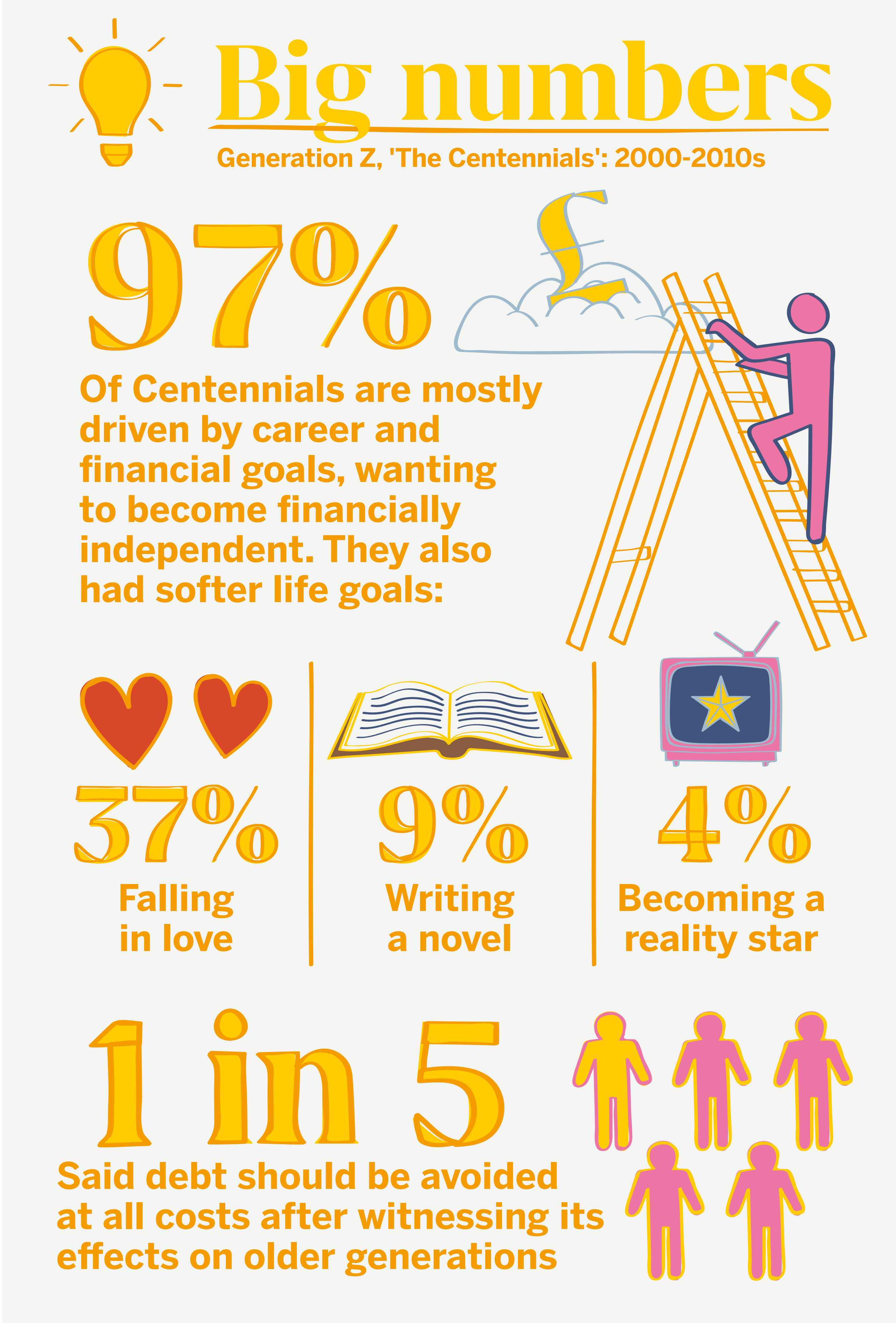
In contrast to the supposed carefree lifestyles being portrayed through their social media feeds, analysis reveals a remarkably pragmatic and sensible approach to all things financial. This could be partly linked to apprehension around their future job chances: a 2024 study[10] by Deloitte found that 59% of Generation Zs believe automation will eliminate jobs.

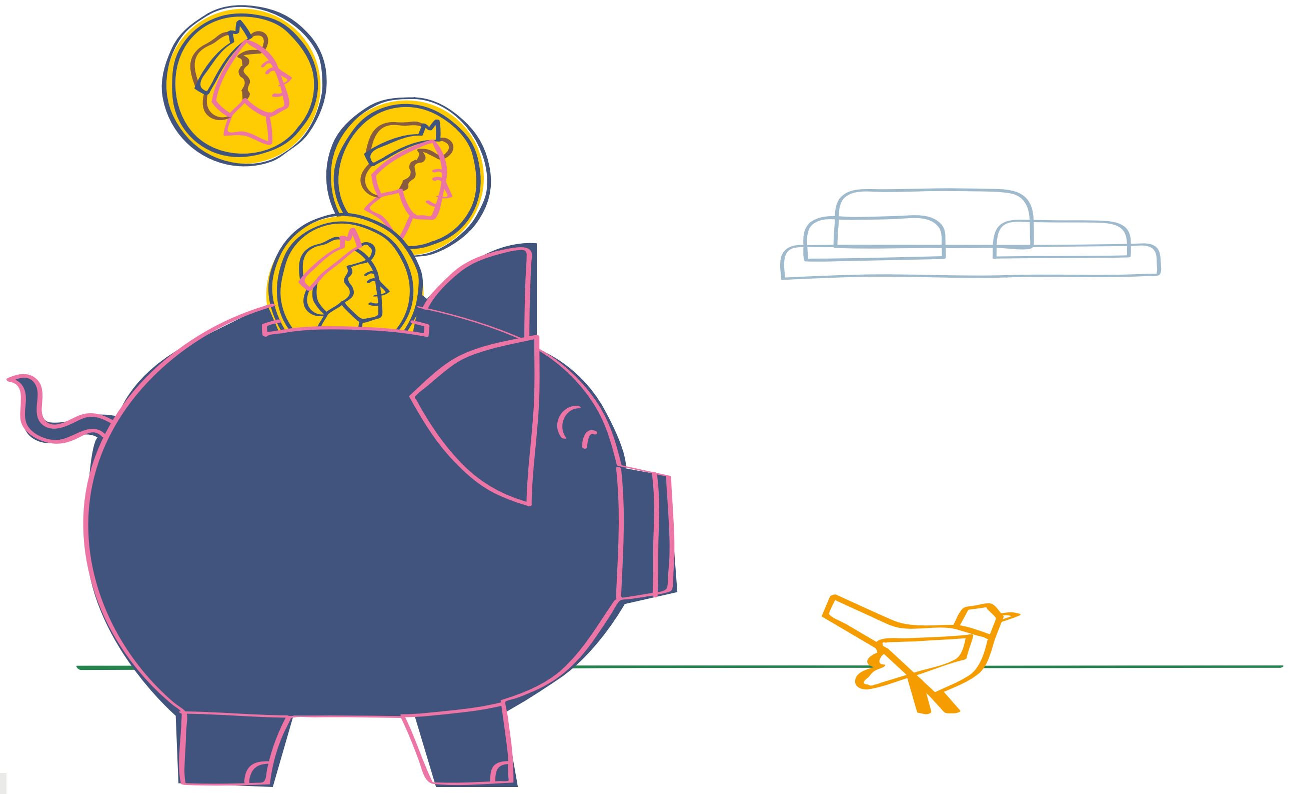
Also known as the Austerity Generation, the youngest Gen Zs have the stress of decisions about higher education hanging over their heads – from whether or not to go, to which one to choose. And given that this generation is far more ambitious than their Millennial counterparts, it's not a decision to be taken lightly in the context of huge competition for the best jobs. No wonder that anxiety and stress levels among this generation are at an all-time high.

Technologically, they certainly have the edge over their Millennial counterparts. While Millennials are switched on digitally with their teenage years defined by iPods and MySpace, Generation Z is the first generation to be raised in the era of smartphones and most don't even remember a time before social media, making them the first true digital natives. It means Centennials take in information instantaneously, but lose interest just as fast; or so the cliché goes.

As the product of largely Generation X parents, whose obsession with providing a safe and secure childhood for their children has been well-documented by social commentators, the knock-on effect is not to be sniffed at. Growing up in a time of global conflict and economic troubles seems to have had an impact on attitudes to risk, career choices and the need for longer-term financial security.

Despite the stresses that life throws at them, the good news is that Centennials seem to be more optimistic about their financial future than previous generations.



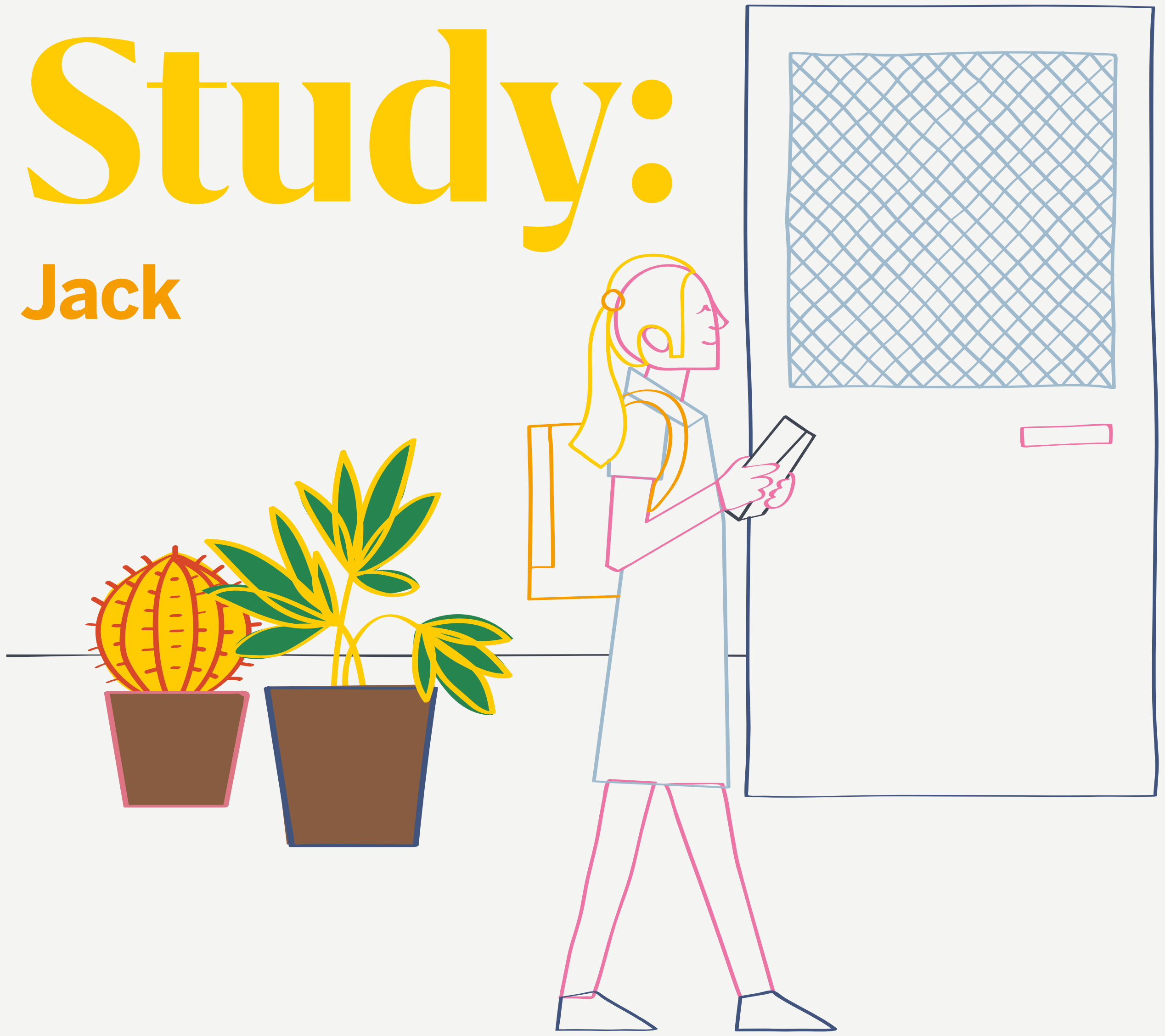


Growing up in the midst of an economic downturn has made them more fiscally cautious and are more likely to identify as savers rather than spenders.

That optimism might be because, in addition to having more time until retirement, younger savers are stashing cash more fastidiously than older generations. ■

Case Study:

Jack



Jack may still be at school but he's already acutely aware of the need to save and has his sights set on being financially independent as soon as possible.

With university beckoning, the 17-year-old is fortunate enough to have the support of his grandparents for tuition fees. His parents, meanwhile, have promised him a lump sum to invest in a property to live in during the duration of his studies as part of a bare trust fund they have set up for him. He is already planning ahead to renting out spare rooms to cover the cost of the mortgage.

The Trust gives Jack peace of mind that unlike many of his fellow students he won't be emerging from higher

BUSINESS CLASS

education with substantial student debt. Nonetheless he wants to make the most of the money that he will have access to from the age of 18. In the meantime, Jack is already in the habit of putting money to one side into a savings account – a combination of gifts from generous family members and the proceeds of afterschool and holiday jobs.

He already has his sights set on a career in the City and makes no secret of the fact that his ambition is to make money, although he's nervous about job prospects in the sector.

Pensions aren't yet on his agenda. He's more drawn to the idea of investing in stocks and shares as a means to securing a higher return on his investment rather than relying on the pitiful interest rates being offered by the banks' savings accounts. Are there any investment products or strategies that he should be considering which are appropriate for his age group? ■

Top Tips — Generation Z, 'The Centennials': Since 2000

Rebecca Barrett
Wealth Planner

1. The best advice we can give Jack is to learn about saving and investing. The earlier one understands the basics the better shape you're likely to be in when it matters most

2. If his school has an investment club it's well worth participating in that as well as applying to relevant firms for work experience in his holidays

3. Jack's parents could be investing in JISAs or pensions on his behalf, as could his grandparents.

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Important Notes

For further details on LISA stipulations, please refer to www.gov.uk/lifetime-isa.

Wealth across the generations

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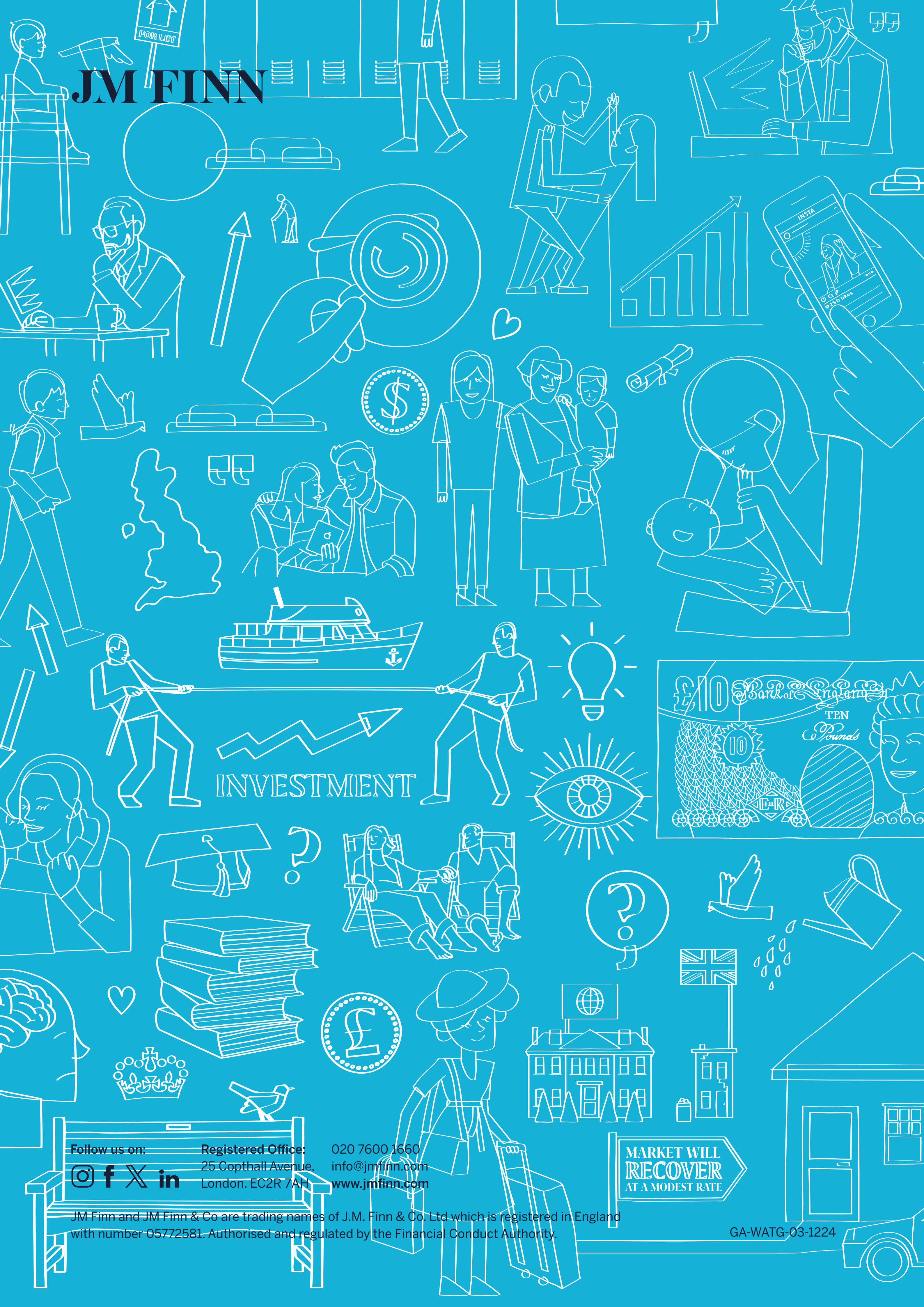

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