

# Financial Viewpoint



**Bespoke**  
Financial Advice Ltd



## **High inflation hits workers and savers**

Reduced spending power calls  
for a new investment strategy.

## **Investment advice - that's a relief!**

A handy guide to tax  
allowances and reliefs.

## **The value of our advice**

How we help people to set and  
realise their financial goals.

# High inflation hits workers and savers

Employment is at a record high, but UK workers are starting to feel the squeeze as wages fall below inflation for the first time since 2014.



*If you'd like to discuss how you can make your money work harder, please get in touch.*



Inflation has gone up, in part, due to the Brexit-related fall in the value of sterling, but the fall in wage growth is unusual as it occurs at a time when employment is at a high. When prices rise faster than wages, it reduces spending power and puts pressure on household finances.

## Keeping up with inflation

If you earned £539 per week (the 2016 median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees) your pay next year would need to increase by another £10 each week to keep up with an inflation rate of 2.6% (which it was in August 2017). Unfortunately, the current average pay growth of just 1.8% means your earnings will actually be worth £4 less each week.

As well as your wage-packet, rising inflation could also erode the value of any savings you have on deposit, leading some to consider a riskier investment where there is potential for your money to work harder. If you find yourself in this situation, we can help.

## Designing your investment strategy

After establishing and agreeing your attitude to risk, we will work with you to create an appropriate investment strategy - one that aims to maximise returns while maintaining the right level of risk for you.

As well as recommending the most appropriate product or tax 'wrapper' (a specific type of tax efficient investment) from the range available to us, we will also recommend the most appropriate fund or portfolio of funds.

Our recommendation will also take into account a number of other factors, including:

- Your objectives for the investment
- Your personal circumstances
- The timeframe over which you intend to hold the investment or pension
- The amount of money you have available to invest
- Other investments that you already have

With so many investment options available and the effects of inflation erosion posing an immediate risk to your savings, the hardest part can be deciding which route to take.

We'll follow a clear and thorough process to clarify exactly what you need from your investments and how much risk you're prepared to take. Our approach will help you get a solution that matches your needs – today and in the future.

*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 down as well as up. You may not get back the amounts originally invested.*

# Investment advice – what a relief!

Every client we meet has a unique and varied range of financial planning needs, so it's important to establish priorities as the first step towards creating a meaningful and relevant financial plan.

When it comes to investment planning, one such priority is making sure you're in a position to maximise the tax reliefs and allowances that are available. Here's a useful summary:



To find out more about how we can plan a tax efficient investment strategy please get in touch.



Pay no tax on the first **£5,000** of dividend income from your investments (This allowance reduces to £2,000 in the 2018/19 tax year)



**Review** your potential Inheritance Tax liability with the introduction of the Residence Nil Rate Band



**Consider** whether you could take advantage of the tax efficiencies available from investing in an Enterprise Investment Scheme or Venture Capital Trust. Please note these are specialist investment options that carry higher risk and not suitable for all investors



Earn up to **£1,000** interest on your personal savings tax free, higher rate taxpayers will be able to earn up to £500



Invest up to £3,600 or 100% of UK relevant earnings, whichever is the greater, up to a maximum of **£40,000** in your pension every tax year and receive tax relief on those contributions



Make the most of your ISA allowance every year and invest up to **£20,000** (in 2017/18)



Make the most of your **£11,300** Capital Gains Tax CGT allowance when selling an asset or investment that has increased in value. Transfer between spouses is currently exempt from CGT. By gifting assets to your spouse or Civil Partner you effectively double your allowance

*This information is based on our current understanding of the rules for the 2017-18 tax year.*

*HM Revenue and Customs practice and the law relating to taxation are complex and subject to individual circumstances and changes which cannot be foreseen.*

*The value of investments and any income from them can go down as well as up and you may not get back the original amount invested.*



# The value of our advice

Good financial advice and planning helps people to protect and build their assets, make the most of their investments and help to achieve the goals and lifestyle they desire.



*For more information about any of our services, please get in touch.*

## Establishing priorities

Every client we meet has a unique and varied range of financial planning needs, so it's important to establish priorities right from the start if we are to create a meaningful and relevant plan.

As time passes, your financial plan will need to evolve, and regulatory changes can impact the effectiveness of any structures already in place. That's why we recommend a regular review to ensure that your plans remain on track and relevant.

## The importance of ongoing advice and service

If you choose to receive ongoing advice and service from us, we'll invite you to regular meetings where we will monitor the progress of your plans and discuss any adjustments required in the light of changing circumstances.

We believe that ongoing service can help you continue to make well-informed choices and give you the best chance of achieving your goals through key life stages.

## Five promises we make to our clients



1. We will help you arrange your finances so that they work as effectively as possible towards funding your life goals.



2. We will help you take steps to ensure your income, assets and family are protected from the impact of long-term illness, disablement or death.



3. We will advise you on how your investments can benefit from relevant tax reliefs and allowances. We will also advise you on the most effective way of withdrawing income or capital from your arrangements when the need arises, or how best to pass wealth to your intended beneficiaries.



4. We will help you keep your plans in focus by regularly meeting with you to review and refresh arrangements. This might be a result of changing personal circumstances, legislation, new opportunities and any other factors relevant to your situation.

5. We will be accessible and responsive whenever you wish to contact us with queries or requests.

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