

Planning, it's not that simple

The Cambridge Dictionary describes Planning as:

'the process of deciding in detail how to do something before you actually start to do it.'

That seems simple enough, yet one of the key challenges we have in life is to not only plan, but to maintain that plan as things change.

When we have conversations with clients, the concept of planning is often discussed. In these instances, we always encourage our clients to plan their life choices, rather than simply just look at their financial plans.

Retirement is an excellent example of this. In our experience, one of the biggest issues that people have with retirement is that they often view it as a time when they stop something, rather than seeing it as the opportunity to start something. When helping you prepare for retirement, we will naturally discuss your income and investment needs. However, we also try to encourage you to spend just as much time considering exactly WHAT you plan to do in retirement.

It may be that you have plans to develop a hobby, perhaps start up a business or travel the world. More recently, we are noticing a growth in people retiring to provide childcare support for their children. Whatever it may be, the first thing you really need to do is plan. When arranging a holiday, the more effort you put into organising it, the better the trip becomes. It is the same with the biggest and longest holiday of them all, namely retirement.

Note also that the planning process doesn't stop once you have retired. A survey from the Office of National Statistics confirmed that a man aged 65 is now expected



to live for another 18.6 years and a woman for another 21*. Therefore, just because you have reached retirement, it doesn't mean that you stop long term financial planning.

In fact, there is an argument that says it is more important than ever to plan. Whilst you may have organised your income and investment plans, you need to discuss many other factors such as succession planning, potential Long Term Care and Inheritance Tax.

It is clear that the process of retirement has changed dramatically. No longer do you have to wait for a set age to come around and then see what money is available to live on. Most people now consider their finances and plan accordingly. In our experience, the success of your retirement often comes down to your state of mind. As Abe Lemons, a US Basketball Coach, once famously said:

"The trouble with retirement is that you never get a day off"

Therefore, just ask yourself some simple questions. Is retirement the start of something or the end of something? Is it a time to look forward or a time to look back? The more positive you feel about your retirement and the more planning you put into it, the better it will be. Just as importantly, this planning process shouldn't stop once you retire.

Because, as somebody once said, the best way to become an old dog is to stop learning new tricks.

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