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# How to plan for a **100-year** life

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The number of people celebrating their 100th birthday in the UK is on the rise. As life expectancy continues to increase, it is more important than ever to plan financially for a 100-year life.

According to the [Office for National Statistics](#) (ONS), there were 16,600 centenarians in 2024 – double the number in 2004 (21 October 2025).

Among those marking the milestone this year is the renowned natural historian Sir David Attenborough. The broadcaster turned 100 on 8 May, and he continues to share his passion for nature with the world. To mark his birthday, Attenborough presented a new documentary series, Secret Garden, exploring wildlife in Britain's gardens.

Attenborough shows that entering later life doesn't have to mean taking a step back. You could still embrace new experiences and create a life you love.

However, planning for a 100-year life often raises important questions about how to arrange your finances to secure the life you want.

## The chances of celebrating birthday milestones could be higher than you think

Turning 100 is still unusual, but your chances of celebrating the milestone might be higher than you expect.

When you're planning your long-term finances, life expectancy is an important factor. While you might think using the average life expectancy would provide you with security, many people live longer than this. If you use the average age when calculating how long your assets need to last, you could find that you face a shortfall later in life.

According to the ONS life expectancy calculator (14 February 2025), a 60-year-old woman will live to 87. Yet, 25% will reach their 95th birthday, and 10% will turn 99. For 60-year-old men, the average life expectancy is 85, with a 25% chance of reaching 92, and a 10% chance of reaching 97.

So, creating a 100-year life plan could provide security in your later years.

**TURNING 100 COULD BECOME COMMON FOR YOUNGER GENERATIONS**

A girl born in 2025 has an average life expectancy of 90, a 25% chance of turning 99, and a 10% chance of reaching 102.

A boy born in 2025 has an average life expectancy of 87, a 25% chance of turning 97, and a 10% chance of reaching 101.

**Source:** ONS

## Transitioning into retirement could become an attractive option for many retirees

Planning for a longer life doesn't just mean ensuring you have an income in the future. It might prompt you to rethink the traditional life stages and consider what suits you.

Traditionally, workers have completely stopped working on a set date when they retire. However, with retirement potentially spanning several decades, that might not be an appealing option for everyone.

Instead, you might choose to transition into retirement – where you'd work fewer hours, move to a less demanding job, or choose a role that gives you more freedom to strike a work-life balance that's right for you. Alternatively, you might opt to study later in life or start a business.

A longer retirement may mean you'd benefit from breaking it down into shorter time spans when creating a plan. For example, you might intend to spend the first decade being active or exploring the world before adopting a more relaxing pace of life.

Dick Van Dyke is an excellent example of a centenarian who hasn't followed the traditional path to create a life that he loves. After turning 100 in 2025, the actor said he has no plans to retire.

Speaking to American morning TV show Today (18 November 2025), Van Dyke said: "I don't want to [retire]. I mean, it's my hobby. It's my life. I love it."

Exploring the possibilities your later years could offer now may help you set clear expectations and allow you to adjust your financial plan to align with them.

## Considering your later years now could help you make informed financial decisions

One of the challenges of planning for a 100-year life is that you need to determine what your life might look like decades in the future. Setting out your lifestyle expectations and hopes now could inform your financial decisions. So, deciding what's important to you could be essential.

As part of your overall financial plan, your financial planner may help you assess your anticipated expenses now and in the future. For instance, you might review your essential outgoings, how frequently you'd like to go on holiday, or anticipated large expenses, like buying a car or renovating your home.

The Retirement Living Standards (3 June 2025) demonstrate how your plans might affect the income you need later in life.

The data suggests that in retirement, a single-person household needs a minimum income of £13,400 a year. This income is calculated to cover essential needs, with some money left over for discretionary spending. For example, it includes the cost of a week-long UK holiday and £20 a week to spend on activities.

To achieve a comfortable retirement, it's estimated that a single person would need £43,900. This lifestyle is defined as providing more financial freedom and some luxuries. As well as a larger budget for essentials, it includes a fortnight in a four-star hotel in the Mediterranean, three long weekend breaks in the UK, and £54 a week for activities.

The Retirement Living Standards figures provide useful guidelines for how much income you might need when you stop working. Setting out your lifestyle expectations now could help you create a figure that's tailored to your goals.

Remember, your expectations and income target are not set in stone. Regularly reviewing your retirement objectives and what's important to you could ensure your financial plan continues to reflect your long-term aspirations.

## 3 day-to-day lifestyle factors that could affect the quality of your retirement

Transitioning into retirement often means embracing significant life changes. Alongside reviewing your overall expenses and exciting one-off plans, such as a once-in-a-lifetime trip, consider what your day-to-day will look like.

Making these three factors part of your retirement plan could improve your wellbeing once you stop working.

### 1. Staying active in retirement

Your mobility and health will affect your lifestyle. While many factors that affect your health are beyond your control, staying active where possible could boost your wellbeing in retirement.

That doesn't mean you have to plan to spend time at the gym when you retire. You might be looking to dedicate more time to gardening or walks through the British countryside.

### 2. Embracing your passions

As centenarians, David Attenborough and Dick Van Dyke demonstrate that you can continue to follow your passions in retirement, or perhaps discover a new interest.

Retirement provides an excellent opportunity to explore new and old pursuits. Regularly spending time on something you enjoy could improve the quality of your retirement.

### 3. Maintaining and creating social connections

According to the World Health Organisation (30 June 2025), around 1 in 6 people worldwide experience loneliness. Social isolation can affect everyone, but losing the social connections you might have enjoyed through work when you retire could mean you feel lonelier than you expect.

Regularly meeting family and friends to maintain social connections or creating opportunities to meet new people, such as joining a club, could lead to a more joyful retirement.

## Calculating how much is "enough" for you to retire

Your pension and other assets that you may use to create an income are essential to achieving your retirement goals. However, when you're saving for retirement, it can be difficult to calculate how much is "enough".

Two crucial factors will affect how much is "enough".

### 1. How long will your assets need to last?

To calculate how much is "enough" to save for retirement, you need to consider how long your money will need to last. As you've read in this guide, the average life expectancy is on the rise, and planning for a 100-year life could provide long-term security.

### 2. What annual income do you need?

You also need to understand what your expected outgoings will be in your later life. This is why thinking about your desired retirement lifestyle and what that means for your income needs is important.

With the answers to these two questions, your financial planner could create a cashflow model that projects how the value of your assets might change over time, which might help you determine how much is "enough".

The outcomes of a cashflow model aren't guaranteed. However, they can provide useful guidance when you're making important financial and lifestyle decisions, including those relating to retirement.

To create a cashflow model, you start by inputting data, such as your annual income and the current value of your assets. You then make some assumptions, like expected investment returns or the rate of inflation.

This data will then be used to create a visual representation of how your wealth might change over your lifetime. By adjusting your assumptions or intended actions, you can model different scenarios.

When planning for retirement, you might use a cashflow model to assess how:

- Adjusting your retirement income will affect what's "enough"
- Reducing your pension contributions now may affect your retirement lifestyle
- Retiring at different ages will affect the amount you need to save for retirement.

As a result, a cashflow model may help you answer the question "how much is enough?" and identify potential shortfalls in your financial plan. Being aware of gaps sooner could mean you have more opportunities to close them.

**Please note: The Financial Conduct Authority does not regulate cashflow modelling.**

### THE COST OF CARE

Depending on your plans, your income needs in retirement might change. Factors such as whether you need care or additional support may also affect your outgoings.

While thinking about losing physical or mental capacity is difficult, addressing the potential need now could help you decide what your preferences would be and how the costs might fit into your financial plan.

According to carehome.co.uk (19 January 2026), in 2026, the average UK residential care cost is £1,298 a week or £67,496 a year. If a nursing home is required, the cost rises to £1,535 a week or £79,820 a year.

Creating a care plan now could mean you have more options should you need support later in life.

## Why planning for a 100-year life could affect your financial plan

Planning for a 100-year life isn't only about saving more for retirement. Longer life expectancies might also affect how you manage your assets.

As an example, a pension provider would traditionally adjust how your pension is invested as you near retirement. This is known as "pension lifestyling" and aims to reduce your exposure to investment risk as the milestone approaches.

However, many retirees now opt to leave all or some of their pension wealth invested once they give up work. Increased life expectancy could mean you still have decades of potential investment growth ahead of you, which might support your income needs. As a result, de-risking might not align with your wider financial plan.

Another important consideration when making a long-term plan is inflation.

Inflation refers to the increase in the price of goods and services over time. The Bank of England (BoE) target is to keep inflation at 2% a year.

A 2% rise in your outgoings might seem small, but it can become significant when calculating the long-term effect.

Imagine you retired in 2005 and calculated that you needed an income of £35,000 a year to be financially secure.

According to the BoE's inflation calculator (27 April 2026), by the end of 2025, your income would need to have increased to £62,682 simply to maintain your spending power.

If you hadn't considered the effect of inflation when creating a long-term financial plan, you could face a shortfall in your later years. This might affect how much you plan to save for retirement or whether you continue to invest a portion of your wealth.

As you can see, planning for a 100-year life might have a direct effect on your financial strategies. Working with a financial planner could help you identify how you might effectively manage your assets in a way that's appropriate for your circumstances and goals.

**Please note: A pension is a long-term investment not normally accessible until 55 (57 from April 2028). The fund value may fluctuate and can go down, which would have an impact on the level of pension benefits available.**

**The tax implications of pension withdrawals will be based on your individual circumstances. Thresholds, percentage rates, and tax legislation may change in subsequent Finance Acts.**

## Regular reviews could help keep your 100-year life plan on track

Even the best-laid plans can change. Regularly coming back to your 100-year life plan could help ensure it continues to reflect your needs.

Whether your goals have changed or external factors have affected your assets, remaining engaged with your financial plan, even after you've retired, is important. Regular reviews may help you identify potential risks or opportunities, adjust your plan following legislative changes where appropriate, and offer you peace of mind.

### MAKING A LEGACY

As you plan for a 100-year life, you might also want to think about the legacy you leave behind.

An estate plan could help you decide how you want your assets to be distributed when you pass away, including to family, friends, or charitable causes. If you don't take any steps as part of an estate plan, such as writing a will, your wishes might not be followed.

**Please note: The Financial Conduct Authority does not regulate estate planning or will writing.**

## We could help you plan for a 100-year life

Planning for a 100-year life could help you feel confident about your finances in your later years, so you can continue to enjoy everything life has to offer.

We could work with you to understand what steps you might take to prepare for your later years. Please get in touch with us:

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**Please note: This guide is for general information only and does not constitute advice. The information is aimed at individuals only.**

**All information is correct at the time of writing (April 2026) and is subject to change in the future.**

**The value of your investments (and any income from them) can go down as well as up and you may not get back the full amount you invested. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.**

**Investments should be considered over the longer term and should fit in with your overall attitude to risk and financial circumstances.**

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