



WINTER 2023

BULLETIN

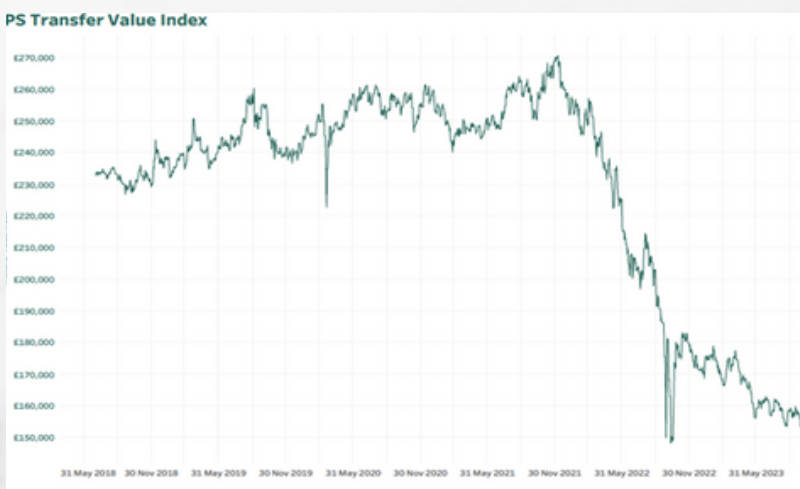
Christmas 2023



2023 - THE RETURN OF THE ANNUITY

Throughout 2023 we have seen many headlines about the succession of rises in the Bank of England Base rate and the impact of this on monthly mortgage payments and the continued “cost of living crisis”. Whilst the consequences have been significant for many people and their monthly outgoings what has been less well documented is the impact of these rate increases on retirement planning and advice.

Firstly the rise in interest rates throughout 2023 and subsequently the rise in gilt yields has caused a reverse in the trend for high transfer out values for final salary pension schemes (known as CETV's - Cash Equivalent Transfer Values). Scheme actuaries use gilt yields amongst other factors to determine how much a pension member would need as a capital sum to secure an equivalent income offered by their scheme from a lifetime annuity.



The graph below demonstrates how the estimated cash transfer value of a 64-year-old member with a final salary pension of £10,000 a year with typical inflationary increases has changed since 2018.

Secondly, rising interest rates have increased the income achievable from money purchase pension pots. The introduction of flexi access drawdown (FAD) in 2015 allowed many to retire earlier, providing flexibility in pension withdrawal. Some are now reconsidering their strategies, opting to secure a guaranteed income for a fixed period using their pension fund, removing concerns about sustainability. Others, having already addressed the gap until state pension age, find appeal in a fixed lifetime income, avoiding worries about market fluctuations, fees, and frequent reviews. Average annuity rates are currently the highest in around 14 years. Quality financial advice is crucial.

STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS IS HOME TO THE UK'S YOUNGEST CHARTERED FINANCIAL PLANNER

2023 saw an impressive accomplishment for Strategic Solutions' very own **Jordan Cruse** for achieving the prestigious title of Chartered Financial Planner at the age of just 21, making him the youngest in the UK to hold this distinction.

His dedication to the field, as demonstrated by joining Strategic Solutions at the age of 16 and subsequently passing multiple financial exams, speaks to his commitment to building skills and knowledge.

Jordan's ambition to pursue further qualifications, specifically the CF8 and CF6 exams to become a Chartered Fellow, reflects his ongoing commitment to professional development. The Chartered Fellow designation is the highest qualification awarded by the Chartered Insurance Institute (CII), showcasing a high level of expertise in the financial planning field.

Kevin Forbes, Chartered Financial Planner and founding partner of Strategic Solutions, expressed pride in Jordan's achievement and highlighted its significance for the entire team. This accomplishment not only reflects positively on Jordan but also serves as a testament to the quality of the next generation of advisers in the firm and the broader financial planning profession.

Jordan's dedication and success are not only commendable for him personally but also inspirational for others in the field, signaling a bright future for the financial planning profession.




ON THE ROAD WITH MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE OLY NEWTON

Strategic Solutions recently took to the road with Oly Newton, an **international speaker and mental health trainer**. Together we visited primary and secondary schools in Folkestone where Oly openly shared his personal challenges and experiences with severe mental illness.

Today, as a thriving mental health advocate, trainer and international speaker, Oly encourages others to seek help in overcoming their own mental health struggles.

He's been an inspiration to listen to and its thanks to our Community Foundation that we've been able to facilitate this tour and support Oly in his mission to inspire young minds and promote change.



 [100talksforchange.com](https://www.100talksforchange.com)

 [Instagram.com/100talksforchange](https://www.instagram.com/100talksforchange)



STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS TEAM BOWLED OVER

Thanks to Yeovil Bowls & Squash Club

Members of the Strategic team were recently invited to take part in some bowls training thanks to the Yeovil Bowls & Squash Club.

The Community Foundation has this year sponsored the club's annual men's invitation triples tournament.



This is one of the most important dates in the Yeovil bowls club calendar and attracts teams from several counties, including Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire. Teams gather for a one day tournament in Yeovil and the event attracts some of the finest players from across the region.

As a thank you eight members of the Strategic team were invited for an evening of practice and training.

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS 2023

A Cracking Christmas Countdown

Exciting news! We're delighted to unveil our Christmas Crackers 2023 campaign.

Commencing on 1st December, as we eagerly count down to Christmas, our Community Foundation is set to champion various local appeals.

Each day, we will spotlight a specific cause and elaborate on the significance of their appeal.



This year our support will include local foodbanks, Christmas toy appeals, community projects and local charities.

It fills us with immense pride to contribute positively to our local community, especially during the festive season.

Follow our social channels from 1st to 19th December to find out more.



AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Girl Power!

Well done to Natasha O'Neill and Rachael Martin for their recent success in the Women In Financial Advice Awards hosted by Professional Adviser. They were both finalists in the following categories:

Natasha O'Neill

Financial Adviser of the Year - South West
Woman of the Year - Investment Advice

Rachael Martin

Woman of the Year - Paraplanning



Dorset Business Awards - Finalist

Strategic Solutions were delighted to be shortlisted in the Dorset Chamber Business Festival Awards in the Community Award category.

Our Community Foundation is a continued source of immense pride. Since its inception, our unwavering goal has been to enhance and support local communities through charitable contributions. Being recognised for these efforts is truly gratifying.



AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS



Top 100!

We were delighted to be included in New Model Adviser's Top 100 financial planning firms in the U K for the tenth year running!

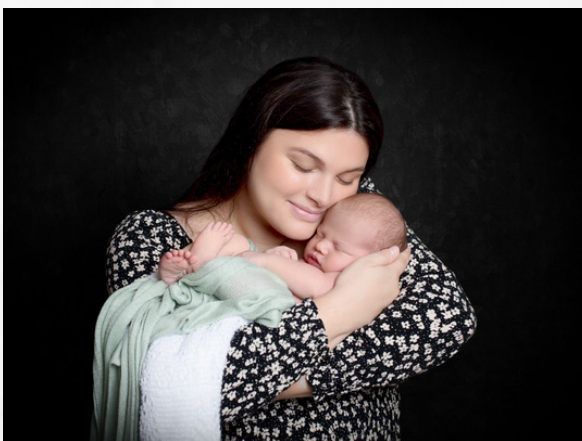
These awards celebrate the best of the professional financial planning community and we were thrilled to be featured in the list at number nine.



We were also thrilled to be included in FT Adviser's Top 100 UK financial advice firms of 2023.

This recognition is testament to the team's hard work and dedication.

STAFF NEWS



Baby Joy!

It brings us immense joy to announce the arrival of Rumi Luca Rogers, the adorable son of trainee financial adviser India Hawes.

Born on August 19th at 4:05pm, little Rumi weighed a healthy 9.2 lbs.



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Principals: Kevin Forbes, Jefferson Fawcett, Giles Wellington, Allan Cruse, Nathan Harris.