

Almost half of UK adults are unaware of their pension savings

New data uncovers a concerning gap in pension awareness and confidence across all generations

In the UK, nearly half of working-age adults cannot estimate the total value of their pension savings. This uncertainty suggests that many lack a clear understanding of their retirement readiness and may be missing opportunities to plan effectively for the future.

Recent data suggest that 47% of people are uncertain about how much they have saved for retirement, a lack of awareness that spans across generations and emphasises the need for increased pension engagement^[1]. Improving visibility and understanding of pension balances could help individuals make better-informed decisions and boost confidence in their long-term financial plans.

GENERATIONAL GAPS IN AWARENESS

While pension uncertainty impacts all age groups, it is most significant among older adults approaching or already in retirement. Two-thirds of those aged 79 and over, and more than half of people aged 60 to 78, say they cannot estimate their pension savings.

Among those in their mid-career years, 43% of 44 to 59-year-olds report the same, while awareness slightly improves among younger adults, with 38% of those aged 28 to 43 and 51% of 18 to 27-year-olds unable to estimate their pension pot.

These differences illustrate the evolution of the pension system. Older generations are more likely to have defined benefit pensions that offer income rather than a lump sum alongside the pension, while younger and mid-career workers tend to have multiple smaller pensions through automatic enrolment, often spread across different employers.

LOW CONFIDENCE IN RETIREMENT READINESS

Even among those aware of their pension balance, confidence about the future remains low. More than one in four say they do not believe their savings will be enough to fund the lifestyle they want in retirement, and only one in five feel very confident that they have saved enough.

The concern is highest among people in their forties and fifties, many of whom were affected by the shift away from final salary schemes before the full roll-out of automatic enrolment. In contrast, younger adults tend to feel less anxious, partly

because they have more time to build their savings and are more likely to use digital tools that make tracking pensions easier.

WHY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

Keeping track of pension savings is a straightforward yet effective step towards financial confidence. Regularly reviewing statements helps ensure contributions stay on course and provides early warnings if savings are falling short of retirement goals. Most providers issue annual statements and offer online dashboards that enable savers to monitor their contributions and projected outcomes.

The introduction of the pensions dashboards will make this even easier by allowing people to view all their pension pots in one place. Regular engagement not only increases awareness but also encourages individuals to take action, such as boosting contributions or consolidating smaller pots.



UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU NEED

Knowing how much you have saved is only part of the picture. The next step is understanding how much you will need. Having this clarity enables savers to make small, informed changes, such as increasing contributions after a pay rise or adding occasional lump sums, which can significantly enhance long-term outcomes through compound growth.

STEPS TO REGAIN CONTROL

Small steps can empower anyone to take control of their retirement planning.

- Track down old pensions: Many people lose contact with previous schemes after changing jobs. A tracing tool can help locate them.
- Consider consolidating savings: If appropriate, combining pensions can simplify management and may reduce costs; however, it's essential to check for any guarantees that might be lost.
- Review contributions annually: Even small increases can have a large cumulative impact over time.
- Check progress regularly: Set aside a yearly reminder to review your pensions, ensuring your goals remain aligned with your current circumstances.

With increasing living costs and evolving retirement habits, staying well-informed has never been more crucial. Understanding your current position is the initial step in fostering confidence, security, and independence for the future.. ■

IS NOW THE TIME TO DISCUSS YOUR PENSION PLANS?

To discuss your retirement goals or if you have concerns about your pensions, we can help you review your savings, find old pensions, and develop a plan to make your retirement targets achievable. Don't leave it to chance; contact us to evaluate your situation.

Source data:

[1] UK Pension Engagement Data 2025 – Pension Awareness Findings: <https://www.standardlife.co.uk/about/press-releases/almost-half-of-uk-adults-dont-know-how-much-is-in-their-pension>

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