

How to approach retirement conversations with your partner

Retirement is a major life event that most people spend years planning and looking forward to.

And yet, research by [Moneybox](#) (3 July 2026) reveals that 43% of over-55s have never discussed their retirement finances with anyone, and just 44% have spoken about them to their partner or spouse.

This could leave couples with different expectations about when they will stop working and what their retirement will look like. It may also lead to missed opportunities to maximise their retirement income.

Read on to discover why so many people avoid retirement discussions with their partner, as well as some practical tips for starting this important conversation and how a financial planner can help.

Why retirement conversations might feel difficult

The Moneybox research found that 56% of UK adults worry about their retirement finances at least once a year and 34% worry at least monthly.

Despite these concerns and the potential impact they could have on their wellbeing, fewer than half of those surveyed had talked things through with their partner.

The data suggests this could be down to the unpleasant emotions that retirement discussions may trigger. When asked how they felt about retirement:

- 18% said confident
- 24% said anxious
- 16% said fearful
- 15% said stressed.

When asked what makes retirement planning difficult:

- 14% said fear of getting older
- 22% cited a lack of knowledge
- 15% said they lack confidence.

In other words, retirement conversations can bring up emotionally challenging subjects that you might feel uncomfortable addressing, even with the person closest to you.

However, while avoiding these topics may provide short-term emotional relief, it could make practical decisions more difficult later. Indeed, effective retirement planning is rarely a single decision, and normally involves many smaller choices made over time.

3 practical tips for talking to your partner about retirement

If you feel awkward discussing retirement finances with your partner, here are a few practical suggestions for broaching the subject:

1. *Choose the right time*

Set aside a specific time for discussion when you're both prepared, relaxed, and not feeling rushed.

Framing it as an opportunity to plan something together and get excited about your future might make the topic less intimidating and onerous.

You might also find it helpful to break the conversation into smaller topics – such as how much you have in your pensions and when you'd each like to retire – rather than tackling everything at once.

2. Start by sharing your goals and concerns

Launching straight into a financial discussion might feel technical and stressful, which could lead to frustration and further procrastination.

The strongest financial plans are built around an individual's or a couple's priorities, values, and aspirations.

Here are a few questions you may find useful:

- What does a fulfilling retirement look like to you?
- What are you most looking forward to?
- What are your main worries?

These prompts could highlight areas of shared interest and differences that may not be evident from looking at your financial paperwork. For example, you might both be keen to spend more time with your grandchildren, but you're also dreaming of exotic travel, while your partner is eager to make home improvements.

You don't need to reach immediate agreement on every point. The first goal is to start talking and understand each other's expectations and goals.

3. Build a shared financial picture

Once you've answered the big questions about what you both want from retirement, it's time to review and assess your shared finances.

Here are a few key pieces of information you might want to gather:

- State Pension forecasts
- Workplace and personal pension statements
- An overview of your ISAs, investments, and savings
- Property and mortgage commitments
- Debts and regular expenditure
- Details of any other future income
- Tax considerations and planned gifts

You'll also need to consider how changes to inflation, investment returns, and your health could affect your financial situation. This is where professional financial advice could prove invaluable.

How a financial planner could support your retirement discussions

If you're struggling to talk to your partner about retirement, a financial planner could help by providing a dedicated time to talk about your finances and goals. They have the knowledge and experience to answer your questions and address any concerns you may have.

A financial planner could also act as a mediator between you and your partner, which may be especially useful if you have different views and are struggling to reach a compromise. They can use sophisticated cashflow modelling software to model different scenarios, such as varying retirement dates and spending levels, to help you create a plan you're both happy with.

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