

MONEY TALK

Your monthly financial wellbeing news, tips and updates, brought to you by Lifetime

For some, it's a fresh start filled with excitement. For others it can bring stress and anxiety

Easing the Back-to-School Transition



Looking Ahead: Domestic Abuse Awareness Month and Supporting Financial Wellbeing

Exploring the connection between financial wellbeing and domestic abuse

Student Finance and Loan Repayments

Many people aren't sure how student debt impacts their long-term financial plans

Looking Back on Pensions Awareness Week

Reviewing your pension and knowing your options can make a world of difference

The December Squeeze: Why Starting Early Matters

It might only be September, but there are just four paydays left until Christmas!

PLUS: Energy Price Cap Rising from 1 October: What It Means for You

Easing the Back-to-School Transition

Now that the school year is back in full swing, many young people are still adjusting after the summer break.

For some, it's a fresh start filled with excitement. For others, moving up a year, starting at a new school, or just getting back into routine can bring stress and anxiety.

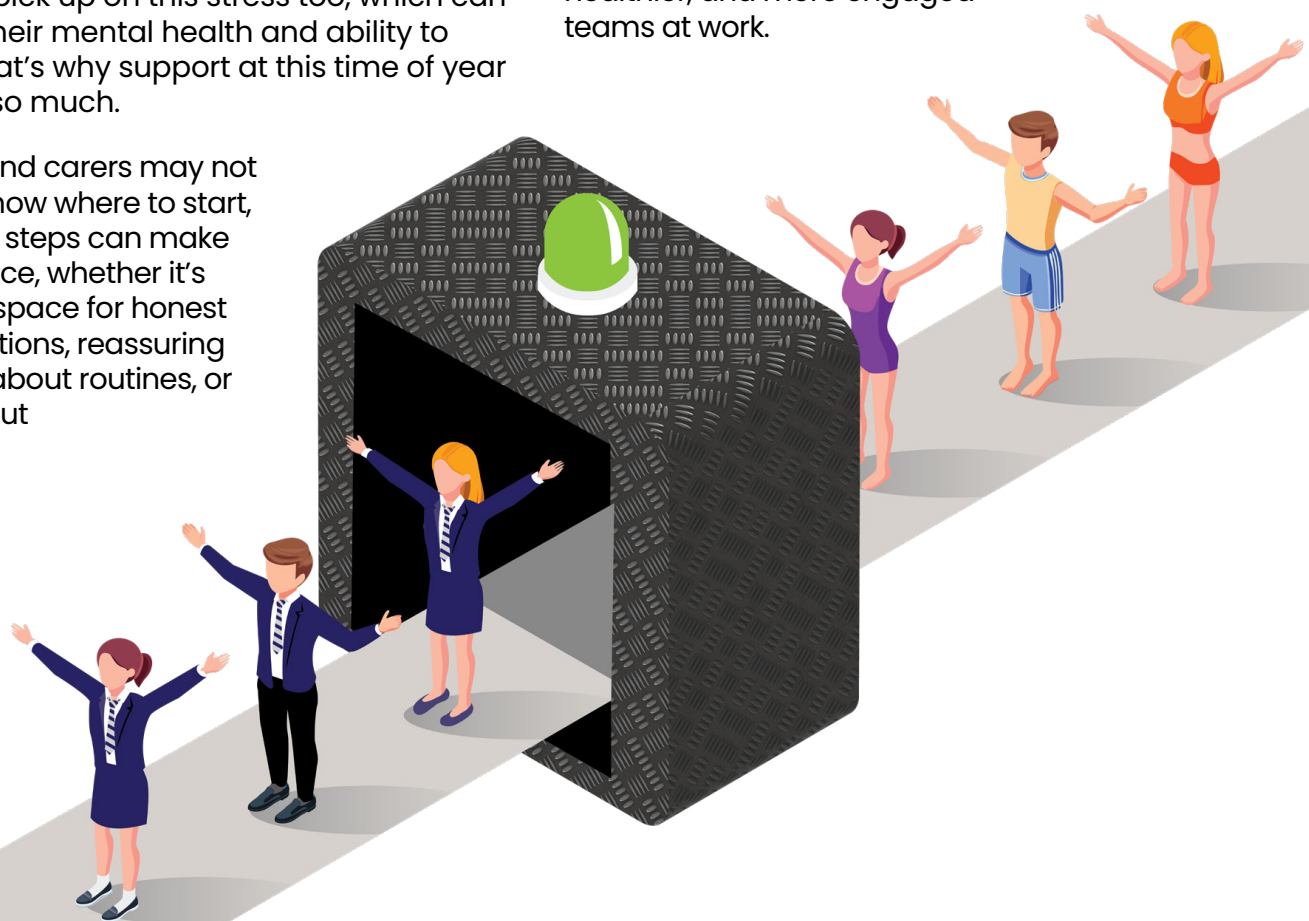
These feelings are often intensified by the broader challenges young people face today, including uncertainty about the future, social pressures, the online world, and, for many families, financial strain. The summer holidays can be expensive, with childcare, travel, and activities quickly adding up. Additionally, the costs of uniforms, school supplies, and rising household bills put extra pressure on parents and caregivers.

Money worries don't just affect adults; children pick up on this stress too, which can impact their mental health and ability to focus. That's why support at this time of year matters so much.

Parents and carers may not always know where to start, but small steps can make a difference, whether it's creating space for honest conversations, reassuring children about routines, or seeking out

resources to ease financial pressure. Helping families feel supported both emotionally and financially can set children up for a calmer, more confident return to school.

Employers also have an important role to play. Workplace benefits like childcare vouchers, employee discounts, and access to financial coaching can make a real difference for families feeling the squeeze. By helping employees manage costs and build financial confidence, businesses not only ease pressure at home but also support happier, healthier, and more engaged teams at work.





Student Finance and Loan Repayments

September also marks the start of a new university year, which means many families are navigating the world of student finance once again. For parents, this can bring the added pressure of supporting children with the rising costs of tuition, accommodation, and everyday living. For younger employees, student loan repayments can feel like a constant question mark hanging over their finances.

The system itself can be confusing, from how maintenance loans are calculated, to when repayments actually begin and how much interest is added over time. Many people aren't sure how student debt impacts their long-term financial plans, or whether early repayments are the right choice.

The truth is, understanding the basics can take away much of the stress. Clarity on what you owe, when you'll start paying it back, and how repayments fit into your wider financial picture makes it easier to plan ahead with confidence.

That's where we can help. Our tools and resources break down all the jargon, while our coaches can guide you through questions specific to your situation, whether you're helping your child get started at university or managing your own repayments alongside other financial goals.

Explore your Financial Wellbeing Hub to access the tools, and guides available.



Looking Back on Pensions Awareness Week



This week marked Pensions Awareness Week, a national campaign designed to get people thinking about their future. At Lifetime, we understand the importance of pensions, not only for retirement but also as a crucial part of overall financial wellbeing.

Planning ahead can feel daunting, especially when retirement seems a long way off. But the truth is, your pension is one of the most powerful tools you have for building security and freedom later in life. The earlier you start, the more choices you give yourself in the future.

That's why we're so passionate about making pensions easier to understand. Whether you're just starting your career, juggling family responsibilities, or already thinking seriously about retirement, reviewing your pension and knowing your options can make a world of difference.

Want to know why pensions matter so much to your financial wellbeing? Read our latest blog [here](#).

Looking Ahead: Domestic Abuse Awareness Month and Supporting Financial Wellbeing

Next month marks Domestic Abuse Awareness Month, a topic that often doesn't get the attention it deserves. At Lifetime, we want to shine a light on this issue and explore the connection between financial wellbeing and domestic abuse, including issues like coerced debt and financial control.

We're excited to be collaborating with **Sharon Livermore**, who runs a domestic abuse education charity. Sharon's mission is clear:

"To educate businesses across the UK on what domestic abuse truly is, the crucial role they can play in supporting affected employees, and the life-saving difference a workplace can make. My goal is to ensure every organisation has a robust Domestic Abuse Policy in place, offering protection, guidance, and a culture of care."

Throughout October, we'll be sharing content that highlights the important role workplaces can play, offering practical guidance and raising awareness of the signs and support options for employees affected by domestic abuse.

We're also thrilled to announce that we have an exciting podcast coming soon featuring Sharon, where we'll dive deeper into these issues, explore real-life examples, and discuss how businesses can take meaningful action. Keep an eye out, you won't want to miss it.

By starting the conversation and providing the right support, we can help build safer, more informed, and compassionate workplaces.





The December Squeeze:

Why Starting Early Matters

It might only be September, but there are just four paydays left until Christmas. For many, that's not a lot of time to budget for gifts, festive outings, and end-of-year expenses.

According to the 2025 IPA Consumer Report, November and the first week of December remain the peak periods for Christmas shopping, with 53% of UK adults doing most of their festive buying during this time. Black Friday continues to play a big role, with the proportion of people planning to do most of their shopping during this period rising from 13% in 2022 to 17% in 2025.

Alongside festive spending, a few wider economic factors are putting extra pressure on household budgets. Inflation is expected to rise slightly this year, while things like council tax, food costs, and mortgage changes mean many people are seeing everyday expenses creep up. Rents have also increased, leaving less disposable income to go around.

The good news is that planning can make all the difference. Here are some simple steps to stay ahead of the December squeeze:

- *Set a budget now to spread festive costs across the remaining paydays.*
- *Open a dedicated savings pot for Christmas spending.*
- *Use financial wellbeing tools or coaching to prioritise spending and reduce stress.*
- *Take advantage of early deals so costs are spread out rather than left to the last minute.*

Even small actions now can make the festive season feel more manageable and enjoyable, helping employees feel more confident about their finances and their future.

***Have questions about money?
Speak to a coach who really listens.***



Energy Price Cap Rising from 1st October: *What It Means for You*

From 1st October to 31st December 2025, the energy price cap will rise to £1,755 a year for a typical household paying by Direct Debit. That's about a 2% increase compared to the current cap of £1,720 (set between July and September 2025).

What is the energy price cap?

The energy price cap is basically a limit on what energy suppliers can charge you for each unit of gas and electricity, plus the standing charge, if you're on a standard variable tariff (also called a default tariff).

It doesn't cap your total bill; what you pay still depends on how much energy you use. However, it ensures that the price you're paying per unit is fair and in line with the wholesale cost of energy.

Book a chat today.

It's also worth having a look around to see what other deals are available; sometimes fixing your tariff could work out better for your household.

Who is covered by the price cap?

If you pay for your energy in any of the following ways, you're covered:

- **Standard credit**
(pay when you get your bill)
- **Direct Debit**
- **Prepayment meter**
- **Economy 7 (E7) meter**

So, if you're on a standard tariff, you don't need to worry about being charged way over the odds.

Why is it going up?

The price cap is reviewed regularly and adjusted in accordance with the cost of supplying energy. With wholesale energy prices creeping up, the cap is increasing too.

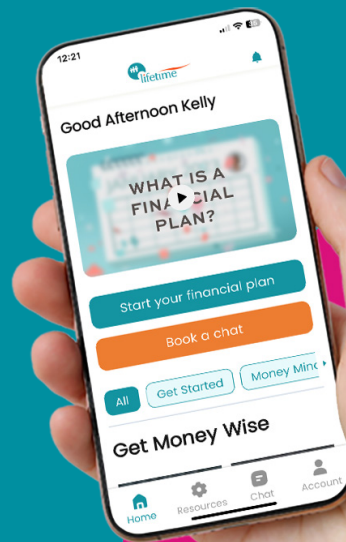
If the rising price cap has you feeling stressed about bills, you don't have to figure it out alone. Our coaches are here to talk things through and help you feel more in control. Book a chat today.

It's also worth having a look around to see what other deals are available; sometimes fixing your tariff could work out better for your household.

New on the hub

Have you checked out the latest video on the Hub yet? Not sure what the difference is between a financial coach and a planner? A coach guides you through your goals, while a planner puts the right products in place to make them happen.

Watch the full one-minute video now to learn more!



September Emoji Word Guess



Answers
 1. Back to School
 2. Falling Leaves
 3. Pumpkin Spice
 4. Apple Pie
 5. Autumn Rain
 6. New Term
 7. First Day of School
 8. Conkers



Your Financial Wellbeing Benefit



Your Lifetime Financial Wellbeing benefit can help you in many ways:

- **Education, tools, access to webinars, videos and other useful content via the Lifetime Financial Wellbeing app.**

Scan the QR code opposite to download it now on the App or Play store.

- **One-to-one chats with a coach.**

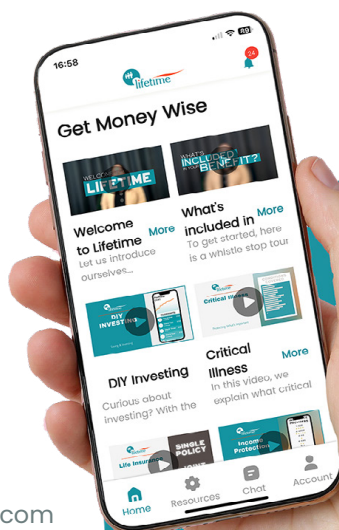
You can send in your money related questions to our coaches or alternatively book a chat with a coach to build your personalised financial plan.

- **Your very own financial plan that reflects your personal goals, circumstances and aspirations for the future.**

If you have had a financial plan created for you over a year ago, you may be able to get a refreshed one that is in tune with your current financial situation.



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Speak to your HR team to find out what your company's access code is.