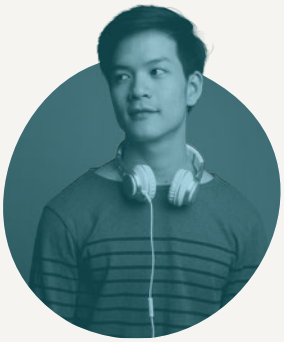
lifetime

EXTRACT

Money & Mindset

A UK Financial Wellbeing Report

2026/27





When money worries affect more than your finances

Money worries can affect far more than our finances. From mental health and confidence to relationships and everyday life, financial pressure can have a much wider impact. This extract explores what that means for employers.

The cost of living may be easing but the impact hasn't gone away.

There are signs that the immediate intensity of financial pressure is beginning to ease, but that doesn't mean people feel financially secure.

This year's findings reveal a more complicated picture. Positive feelings about money have fallen, financial confidence remains uneven and money worries continue to affect almost every part of people's lives. From sleep and stress to relationships, work and future plans, the effects of financial pressure can be felt across everyday life.



Key Findings

Money is still affecting our wellbeing: Most people say money worries affect their mental health to some degree.

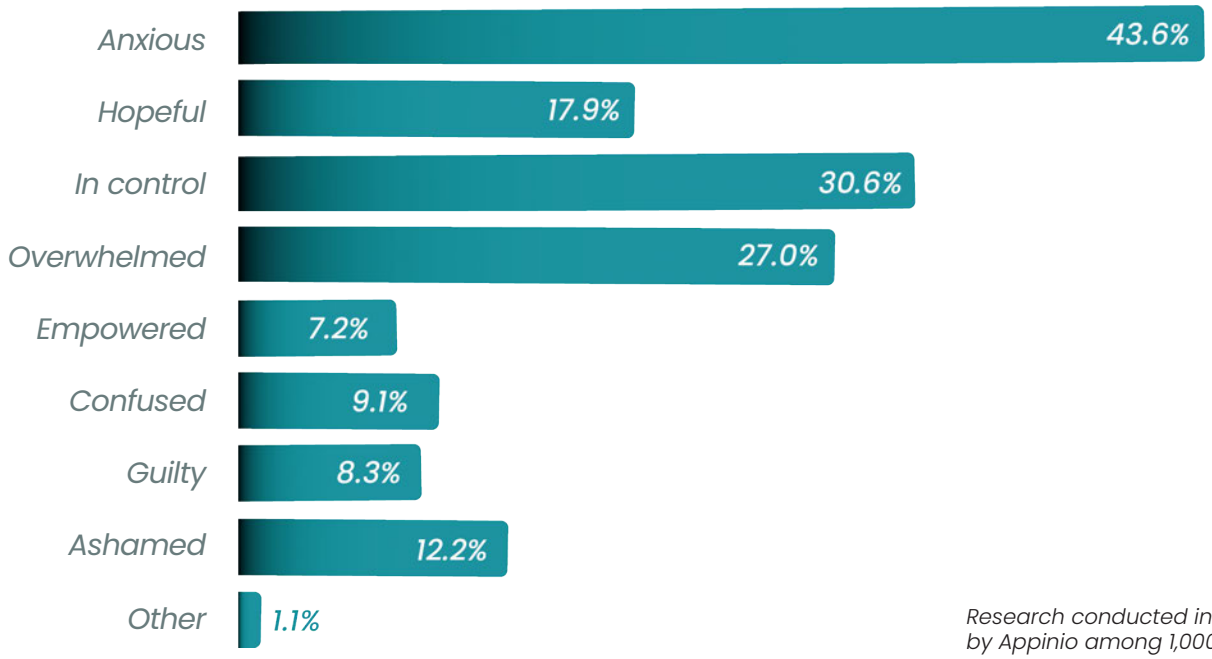
More information doesn't mean more confidence: People may have access to more financial information than ever, but many still don't feel confident enough to act on it.

The impact isn't equal: Younger people and women consistently report greater financial pressure, lower confidence and greater emotional impact.

People want support: More than four in ten people say they would benefit from financial education and wellbeing support through their workplace.

Financial wellbeing isn't simply about having enough money, it's about feeling confident enough to manage what comes next.

Q: Which emotions best describe how you feel about your finances?



Research conducted independently by Appinio among 1,000 UK adults.

Money worries can affect far more than our finances, influencing our wellbeing, relationships, work and everyday lives.

Money worries continue to have a significant impact on mental wellbeing across the UK. While fewer people say financial worries affect their mental health all the time, the wider impact of financial pressure has become harder to ignore.

Stress and sleep remain the areas most affected, but the effects reach much further.

Financial worries are also affecting relationships, family life, physical health and performance at work.



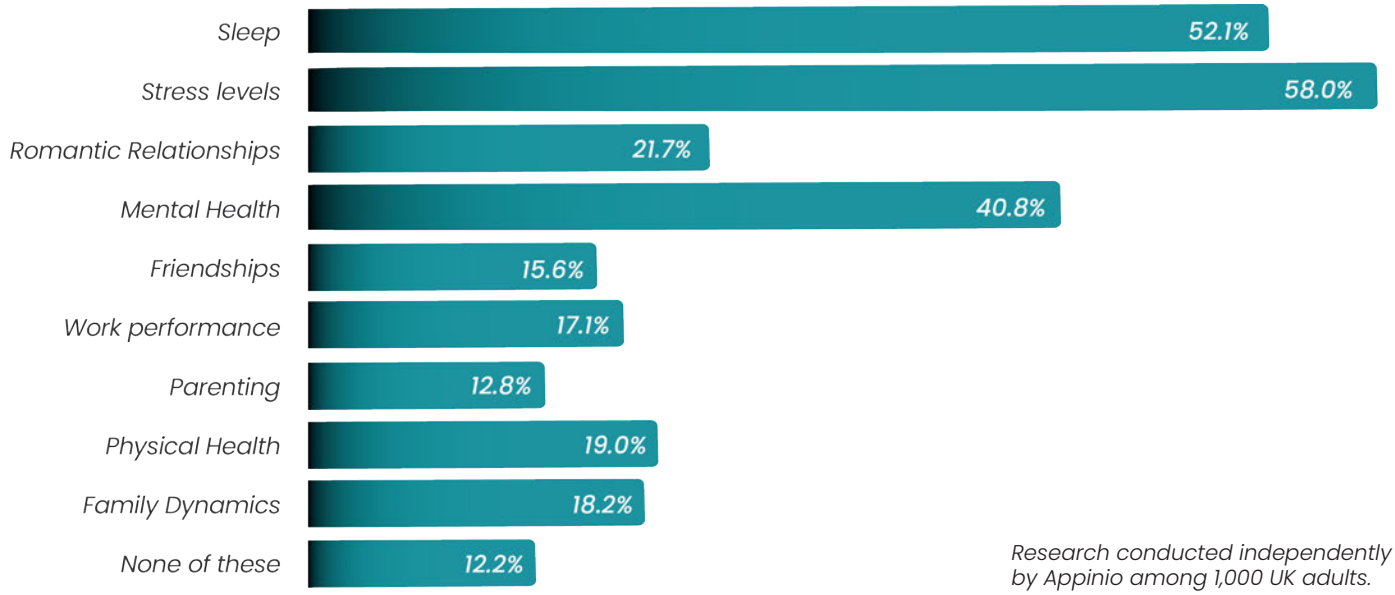
What we're seeing

- **56.4%** of **Gen Z** say money worries affect their mood or mental health all the time or very often.
- **42%** of **women** report the same, compared with **36.1%** of **men**.
- **98.2%** of **Gen Z** say money worries have negatively affected at least one area of their life.

The effects of financial pressure don't disappear when the immediate worry does. The emotional impact of financial pressure can continue long after the immediate financial worry begins to ease.

For employers, this means financial wellbeing should be part of a wider approach to employee wellbeing, rather than something people are only encouraged to access when they are already struggling.

Q: Have money worries ever negatively affected the following?



Research conducted independently by Appinio among 1,000 UK adults.

Money remains one of the hardest conversations to have.

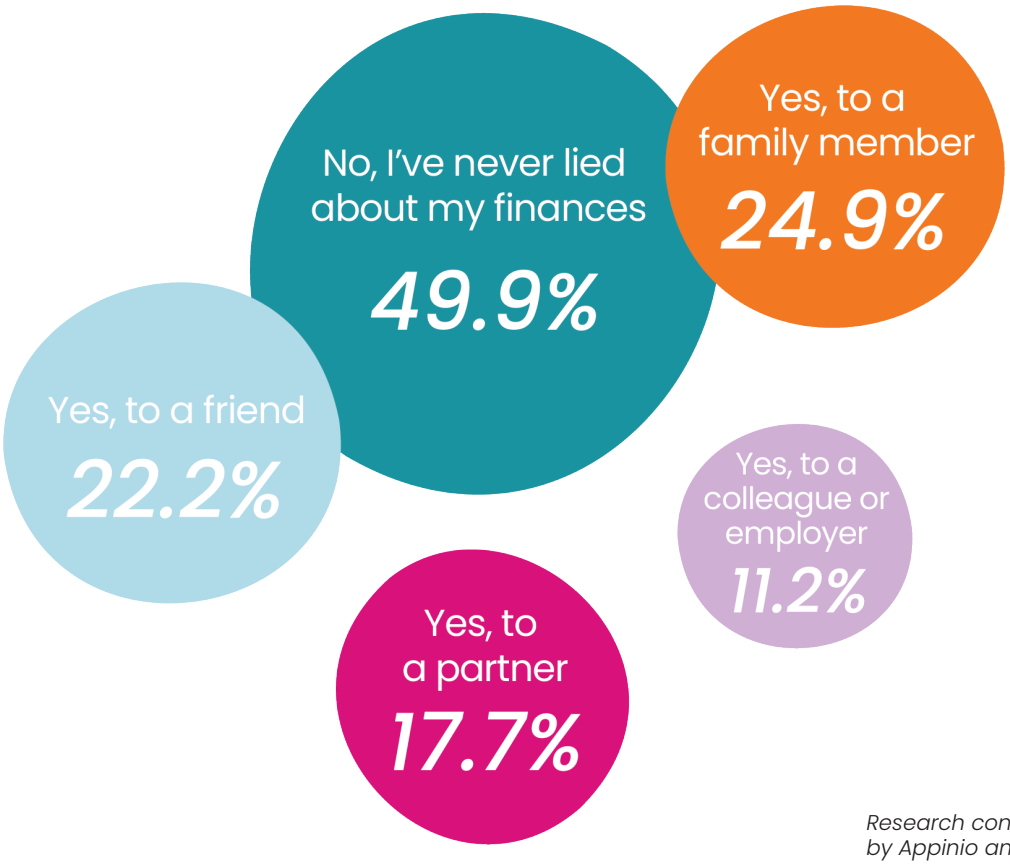
Money can still be difficult to talk about, particularly when people are worried about being judged or admitting they're struggling.

Half of people say they have lied to someone about their finances, while financial pressure can also affect people's social lives, with many saying they have turned down plans because they couldn't afford them.

For **Gen Z**, more than **four in 10** say they often turn down social plans because of money. These findings highlight how financial pressure can lead people to keep their worries to themselves or miss out on everyday experiences, making it important that financial support feels accessible and free from judgement.



Q: Have you ever lied to someone about your finances?



Research conducted independently by Appinio among 1,000 UK adults.

Confidence is not evenly distributed.

Most people say they feel at least somewhat confident making important financial decisions, but the findings reveal a significant gap between generations.



Only **15.3%** of **Gen Z** describe themselves as very confident, compared with more than **one in three Baby Boomers**. Confidence has also fallen among **Millennials** compared with last year.

Asking for help can be difficult

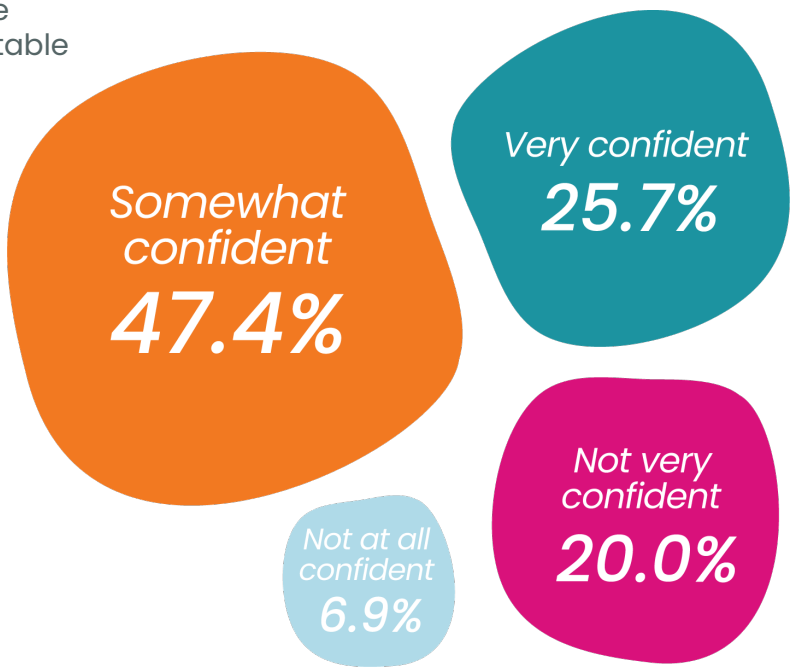
More than two in five UK adults say they have avoided getting financial advice because they felt embarrassed or weren't sure where to begin. This rises to more than half among Gen Z and Millennials, suggesting that the barrier isn't always a lack of available support, but whether people feel comfortable enough to access it.

Information isn't always enough

The findings highlight a wider gap between having access to financial information and having the confidence to use it. For many people, particularly younger adults, building financial confidence means having support that feels accessible, relevant and free from judgement, helping them move from understanding their options to feeling able to take action.

When people do seek financial support, they are most likely to turn to friends and family, ahead of financial advisers and online resources, while younger generations are particularly likely to use social media as a source of financial information. This highlights the importance of making trusted financial support easy to find, understand and act on, particularly for those who may not feel confident seeking professional advice.

Q: How confident do you feel making important financial decisions like saving, investing, or budgeting?



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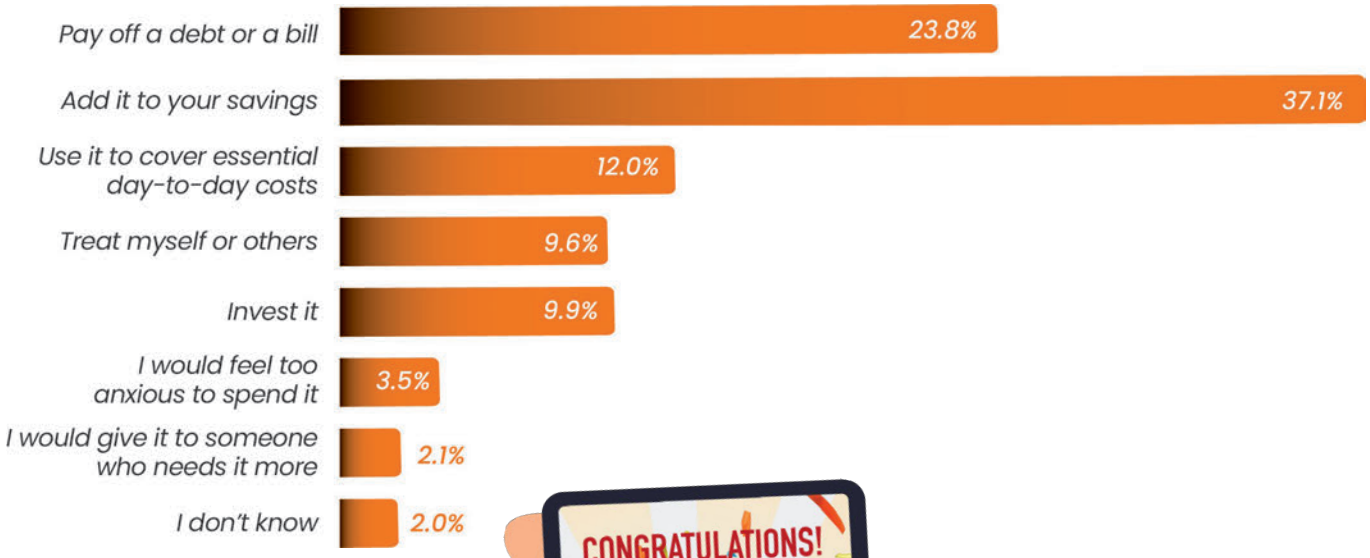
An unexpected £500 can reveal a lot about someone's financial position.

While some would use the money to save or invest for the future, others would put it towards debt, bills or essential costs.

33.1% of **Gen Z** would use an unexpected £500 to pay off debt or cover essential costs, compared with **29.9%** of **Baby Boomers**, highlighting how financial priorities can vary across generations.

Rising costs continue to shape people's financial priorities, affecting everything from household essentials and housing to savings and wider wellbeing.

Q: If you gained £500 unexpectedly, what would you do with it?





Research conducted independently by Appinio among 1,000 UK adults.

Financial security comes first.

Across the UK, feeling financially secure is the most common financial goal slightly ahead of becoming debt-free.

However, knowing what people want from their financial future doesn't always mean they feel confident getting there. **56.4%** of **Gen Z** have made a financial decision they regret in the past 12 months, almost **four times** the proportion of **Baby Boomers**. A similar gap appears in financial knowledge, with **36.5%** of **men** saying they understand key financial concepts very well, compared with **18.4%** of **women**.

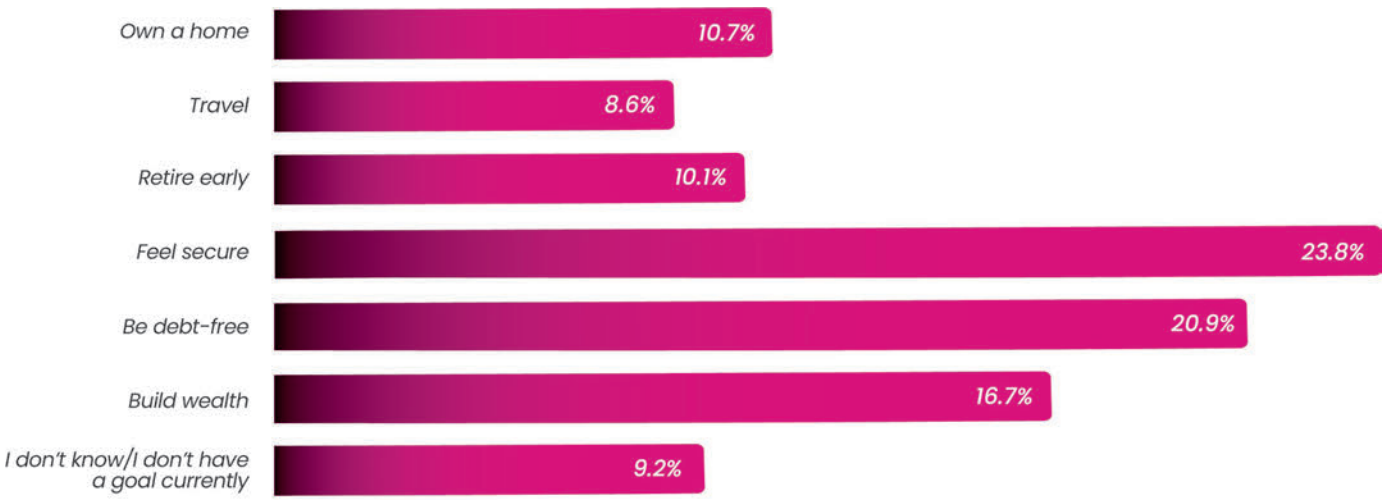
The findings highlight the importance of giving people the knowledge and confidence to make informed financial decisions and feel more prepared for the future.

What now?

More than **four in ten** UK adults say they would benefit from a workplace financial education and wellbeing benefit. People aren't just asking for more information, they're looking for support that helps them understand.



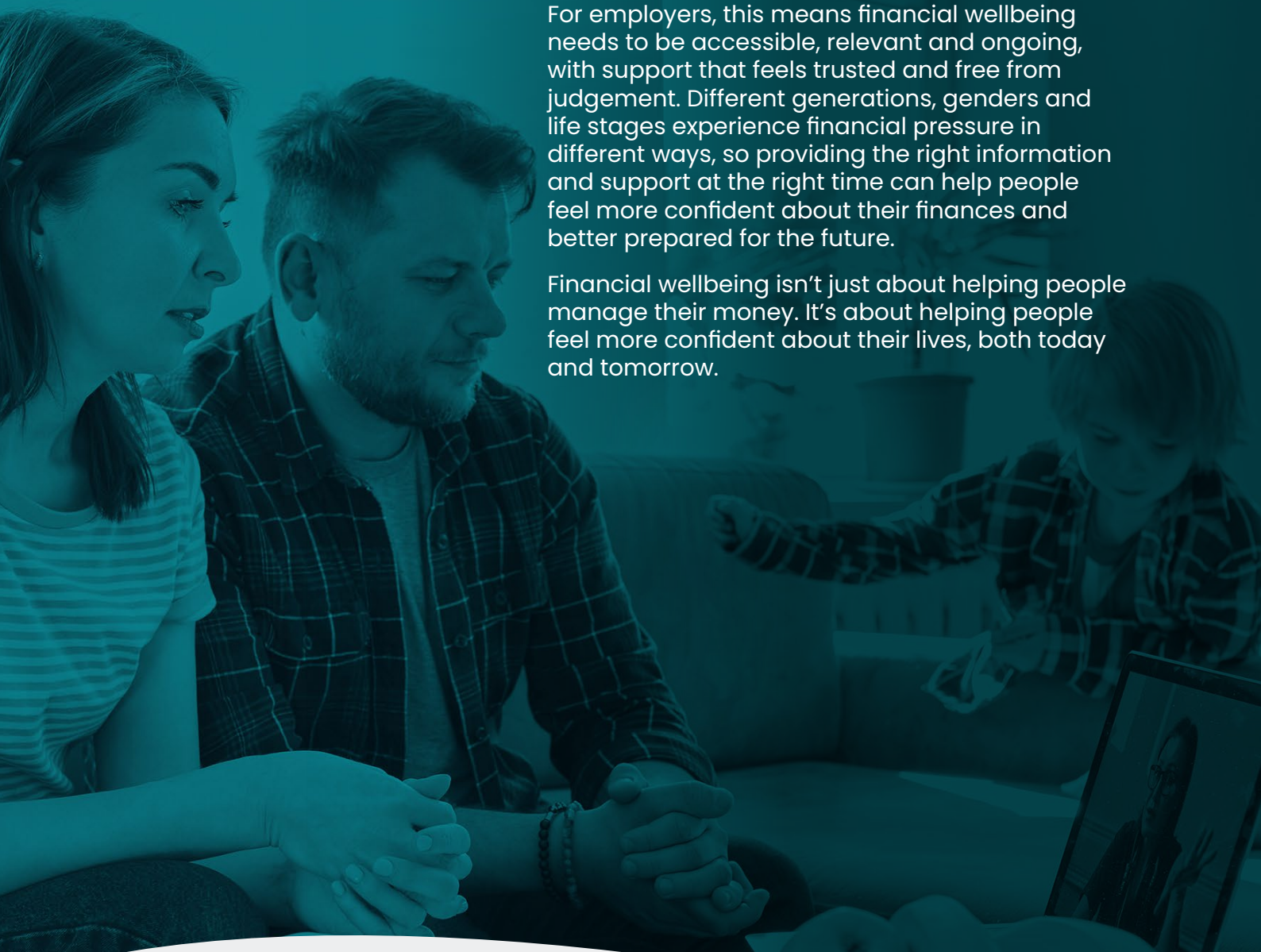
Q: What is your biggest financial dream or goal right now?



Research conducted independently by Appinio among 1,000 UK adults.

Financial wellbeing can't be an afterthought.

People are still experiencing financial pressure through their mental health, relationships, work, confidence and plans for the future, while those experiencing the greatest pressure aren't always the people who feel most comfortable asking for help.



For employers, this means financial wellbeing needs to be accessible, relevant and ongoing, with support that feels trusted and free from judgement. Different generations, genders and life stages experience financial pressure in different ways, so providing the right information and support at the right time can help people feel more confident about their finances and better prepared for the future.

Financial wellbeing isn't just about helping people manage their money. It's about helping people feel more confident about their lives, both today and tomorrow.

Want to see what financial wellbeing support could look like for your organisation?

Book a demo with Lifetime to explore how our financial wellbeing support can help your employees build confidence, improve their financial resilience and access support when they need it.

Want access to the full report?
Get in touch and we'll send it your way.

lifetime