

# What consumers want

A CII Research Report

## Pension freedoms and a 'new normal' in retirement



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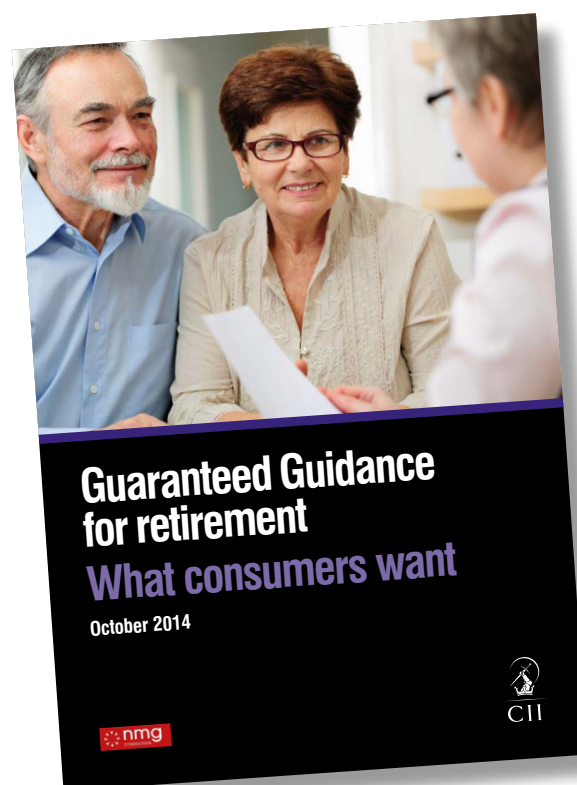
## 2 Introduction

In April 2015, Defined Contribution (DC) pension savers experienced a radical change in the options available to them when taking their benefits, following legislation enacting a programme of reforms known as freedom and choice<sup>1</sup>.

During the preceding consultation period for freedom and choice in the summer of 2014, the Chartered Insurance Institute, the world's largest professional body in insurance and financial services, commissioned research from NMG<sup>2</sup> to understand what information, support and guidance consumers thought they would need under the new reforms. This research was commissioned to inform both the design and delivery of the new Pensions Wise service and the professional support required in terms of Standards, Training, Accreditation and Revalidation (STAR) for this new service.

With the implementation of the reforms, the CII has a continued close interest in how consumers are faring in the new world of choice. To understand more about how the reforms are playing out in practice, the CII commissioned a second phase of consumer research from NMG, carried out in the autumn of 2015, to explore these questions further to assist the profession in its overarching objective to promote consumer trust and confidence.

The research involved a mix of 30 one-to-one qualitative depth interviews and a 15-minute on-line survey with 1,005 pre-retired and recently retired consumers. All participants were holders of one or more DC pensions but those with £100,000+ in other assets (not counting their residential property) were screened out, as were people who have a regular financial adviser. The sample was designed to research those to whom the policy to provide a free guidance service was most directly addressed<sup>3</sup>.



Our 2014 research project proved to be a key piece of evidence informing the public policy debate on the implementation of the Government's pension reforms, and in particular was cited several times in Parliament in the context of the two bills that enacted these reforms. The study also provided an important evidence base informing the CII's own work responding to the Government's call to provide training and accreditation services for the Pension Wise delivery partners.

1. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/freedom-and-choice-in-pensions> for further details

2. The findings and conclusion are available at <http://www.cii.co.uk/knowledge/policy-and-public-affairs/articles/cii-report-guaranteed-guidance-what-consumers-want/32081>

3. Further details of the objectives, methodology and sample frames used are contained at Appendix 1.

## Key messages from the research 3

The research shows that **consumers have new requirements for information and support** under freedom and choice:

- They have an **extended period of decision making, with multiple stages**, to make active choices about how to access their DC pension benefits.
- This, in turn, has meant that they want to **'draw down' information and guidance, as and when required**, as they build up their understanding of the choices available and the potential outcomes for them of those choices. Traditionally, this information has been provided in a single 'lump sum' wake-up pack.
- As a result **providers of pensions and financial advice need to have capabilities to respond** to these changes in consumer requirements.
- They need to **tailor information and guidance to reflect consumers' own specific needs and circumstances** and provide it in a way that is supportive of their own decision making style and where they are in their process. What is helpful for one consumer may not be helpful for another.

To underpin these changes, the CII believes all staff who work with consumers whether providing information, guidance or advice, **need the skills and competence** to:

- **Understand and empathise** with consumers faced with the challenges of making these choices;
- **Identify where consumers are** in their decision making process and their appetite to understand and engage with the considerations involved; and
- **To offer the information, guidance or advice they personally need *at that point*** to enable them to move forward towards making and exercising good choices.



## 4 Changes in consumers' needs and behaviours

The research survey found that respondents generally felt positive about retirement with 61% saying that they 'can't wait to retire'. Retirement was often seen as a time to enjoy travel, hobbies and time with family. Taking a small lump sum from a pension was a popular choice to support this. The most frequently mentioned concern was the possibility of failing health with almost half (44%) saying they were worried about this happening in retirement.



I'm looking forward to it – the perks of a bus pass, more time at home and a bit of travel.



(Female, 60, £10k–£50k)

But what was also clear from the interviews was that many respondents felt daunted by the many options, decisions and the complexity of financing retirement. Several factors contributed to this:

- The great majority have moved jobs at least once leading to fragmented/multiple pensions
- Changing circumstances (divorce, redundancy, inheritance) impacted the complexity of savings and investments
- New rules are still bedding in; low levels of knowledge and high volumes of paperwork made many anxious about making the right decisions in unfamiliar territory

- The danger of scams added to the pressure (especially amongst those less financially-savvy)
- Changes in State retirement date meant the goalposts have moved for some, who now needed to 'bridge the gap' through semi-retirement, taking a lump sum, "soldiering on"
- Feeling that goalposts may yet change again – and the need for a "crystal ball".

Whilst survey respondents were motivated to engage with planning, few said they were 'very knowledgeable' about the options available to them at retirement with around 55% claiming they were 'quite knowledgeable'. From the interviews, there was a sense that perhaps respondents were reticent to reveal what they did and didn't know and so could tend to over claim their knowledge.



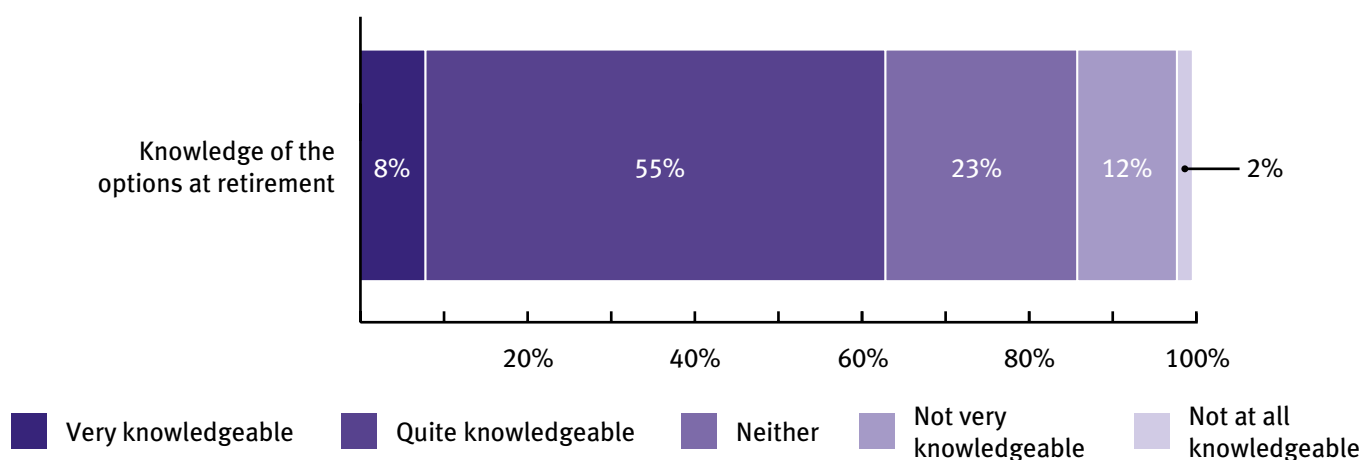
I get my pension early as I'm a teacher and I'm looking to do other things that interest me...But it's all a bit scary. I'm trying to muddle through and do the best I can. I hope I'm doing everything right.



(Female, 54, £50k–£120k)

**Figure 1: Few would say they are 'very knowledgeable' about the options available to them at retirement.**

Quant: Around half would put themselves in the 'quite knowledgeable' category (Base: all respondents: 1,005).



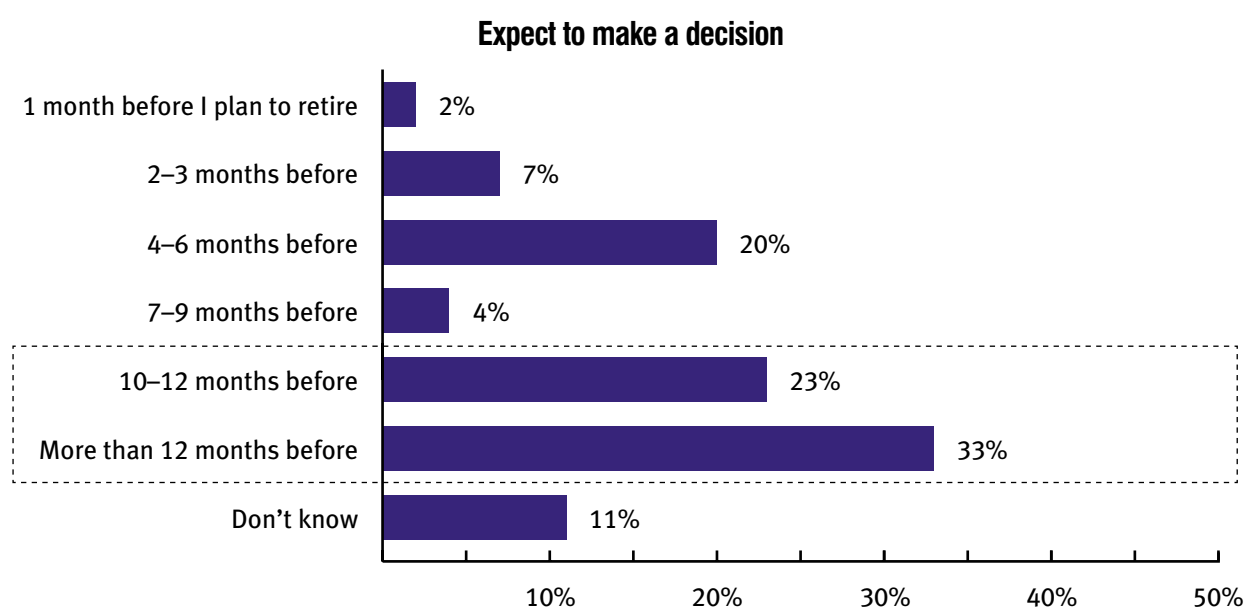
Qual: Consumers tend to over-claim their knowledge levels – they don't know what they don't know.

The survey showed that respondents realised they have to make an active decision about their pension savings in the new regime. Awareness of the new pension freedoms was high with 57% of respondents saying they were ‘very aware’ – an increase of 10 percentage points compared with 2014. And there was a clear demand for earlier engagement with the decision making process. Over half (56%) expected to make their decision 10 months or more before they retire.

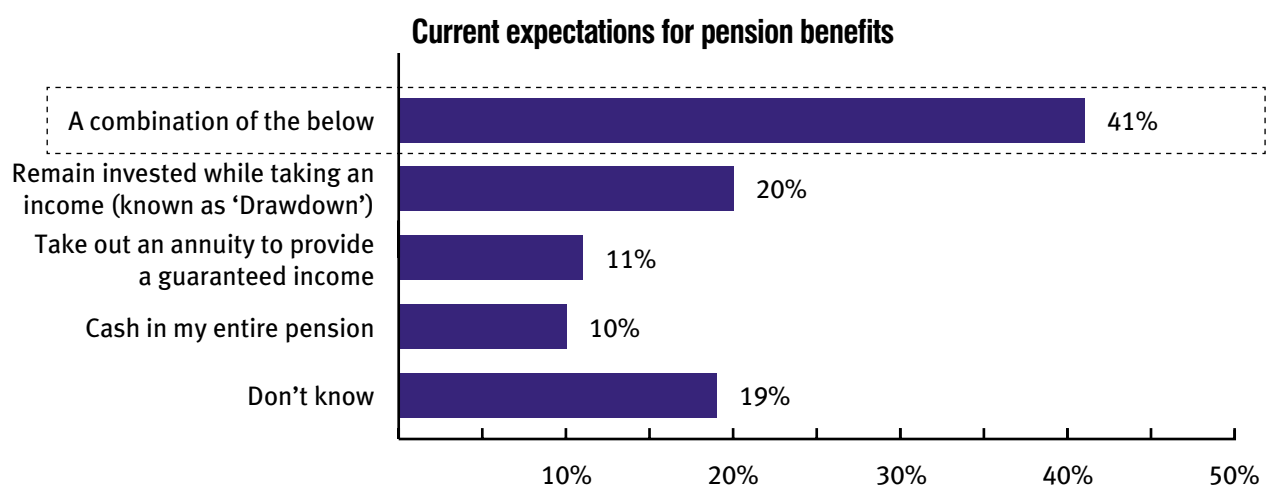
There was also a propensity for respondents to say they expected to take advantage of the new pension freedoms – with the most common intention (41%) being to use a combination of the options open to them and a further 20% looking to use drawdown.

## Figure 2: The majority expect to take a decision on their pension savings 10 months or more before they retire.

Quant: Almost half expect to take their benefits as a combination of solutions (Base: 445).



Note: Those with pots of <£50k more likely to make a decision 1 month before retirement



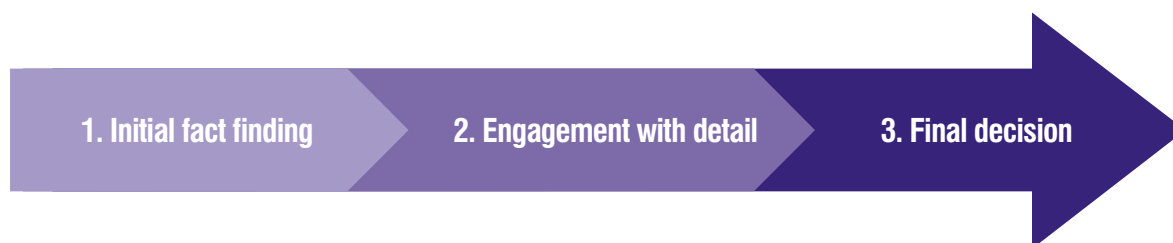
Note: Amongst those who have had provider communications and/or used Pension Wise, ‘Don’t know’ reduces to 9% although the most common intention is still ‘A combination’.

**There is a clear demand for earlier engagement and propensity for “best of both worlds” solutions pointing to a need for services that support consumers around these potentially complex decisions.**

## 6 Consumers' decision making process under freedom and choice

From the research interviews, it was clear that respondents went through more than one stage in their decision making process. At each stage, they asked different questions and required different levels of information, 'drawing down' information as required to build up their knowledge and to formulate their own personal strategy.

NMG's analysis of their responses characterised the process as falling typically into three stages as set out below:



### The initial fact find

At the initial stage, consumers were looking for high-level explanations from an impartial source or site. They were not looking for fine detail or lengthy check lists.

The interviews showed that the stimulus to start looking into retirement was triggered by a wide range of changes or events. Examples included:

- Reaching a symbolic age, e.g. 50 or 55 – especially for those with the larger pots
- Work changing or becoming too much
- Ill health or the death of someone close making them think 'life is too short'
- Ageing parents
- Rule changes, e.g. Budget 2014/NRD dates meaning a need to reappraise the options
- Policy maturities (endowments, early pension pots, etc.)
- Major lifestyle changes, e.g. divorce, children leaving home, birth of a grandchild.

It was rarely about waiting for the State pension date and was usually much earlier than this. Importantly, the so-called wake-up packs from pension schemes or providers, if even remembered by respondents, seemed rarely to be a key trigger – the thinking has usually already started by then.

“

50 was the age I started thinking about winding down. I wanted a better work/life balance. I lost my best friend who was 42. He had cancer.

”

(Male, 55, £10k–£50k)

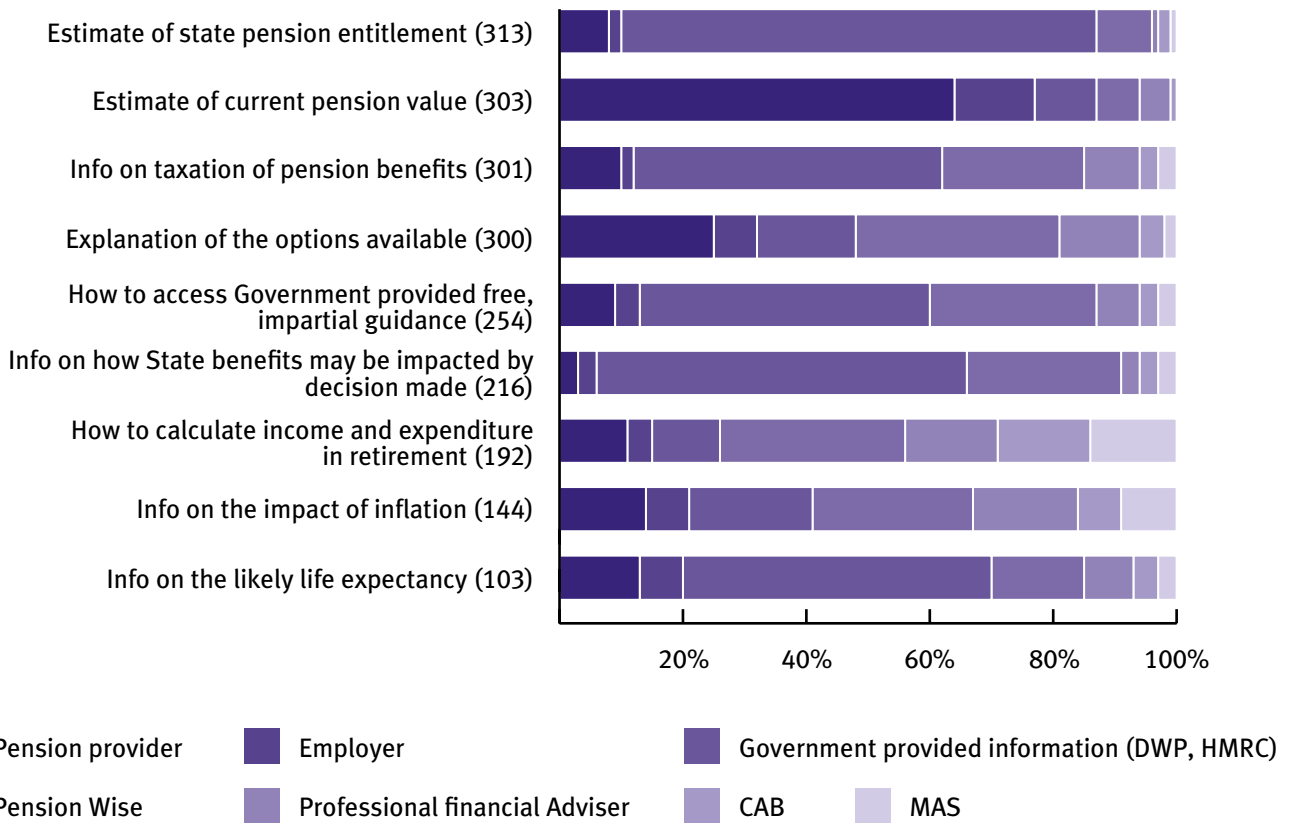
While there was no single time horizon or single source used, this stage was characterised by the need for introductory and trustworthy information. Respondents were looking for basic, ‘must know’ information and would tend to look for it from official, unbiased sources. There was a need for an organisation with credentials of trustworthiness to deliver a simple ‘introduction to pensions’ service at this stage. Where employers offered this it was highly valued.

There was also an expectation, as we found in last year’s research, that government – principally the DWP and HMRC – would provide much of this ‘must know’ information around pensions and their taxation. The key piece of information they would look to obtain from providers was an estimate of their current pension value.

**Figure 3: There are expectations that government (e.g. DWP, HMRC) will provide much of the ‘must-know’ information around pensions.**

Quant: In addition to ‘must-know’ information, Pension Wise deliverable is expected to be more a) practical and b) individually relevant to the consumer (Bases: see numbers in brackets).

**Expected sources of information**



Qual: Different expectations: Government = basic, ‘need to know’ topics, such as impact on state benefits, taxation and life expectancy. Pension Wise = practical guidance allowing the individual to arrive at a realistic estimate of their income in retirement.

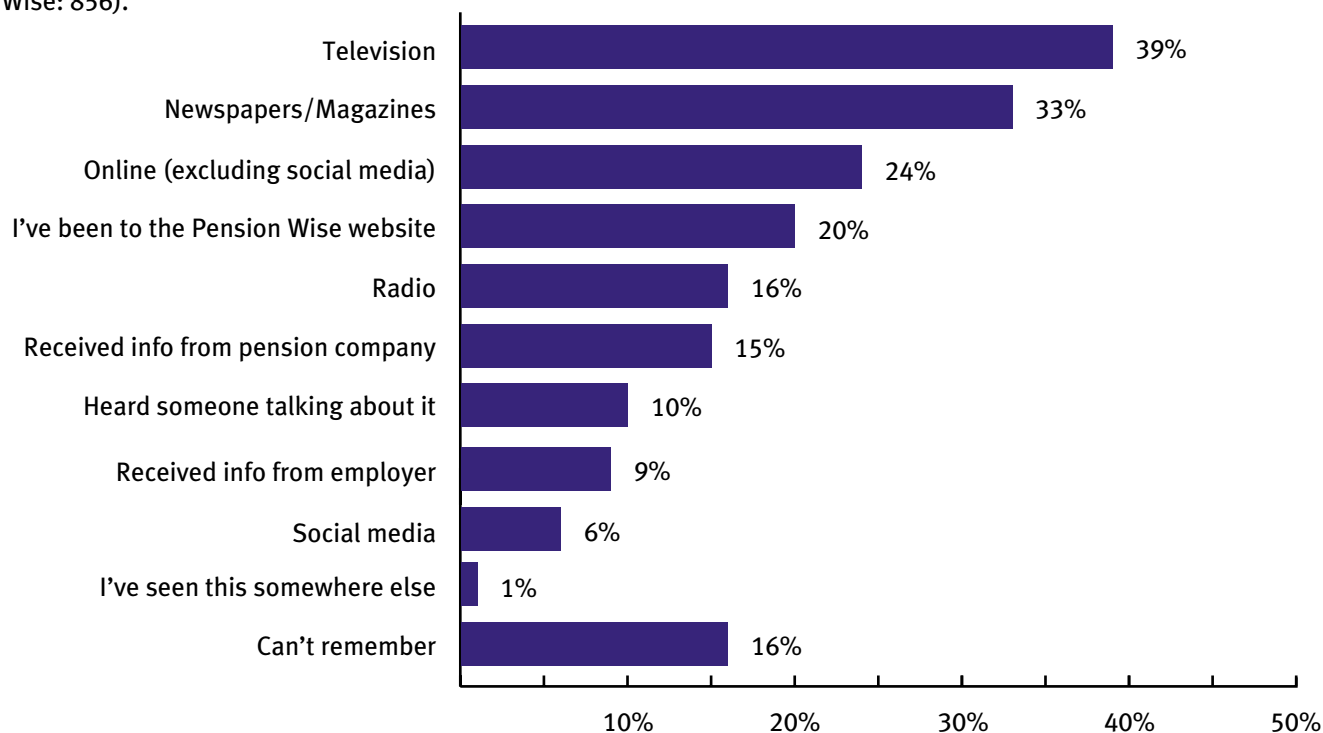


## 8 Consumers' decision making process under freedom and choice continued

Prompted awareness of the availability of guaranteed guidance showed an increase from 2014 with 85% saying they were 'very aware' or had 'some awareness' (2014; 76%). This awareness was most frequently attributed to above-the-line channels (TV, radio, etc.) rather than to their employer or pension provider. But whilst 1 in 4 said they had viewed the Pensions Wise website, 3 in 4 had made no use of the service via any channel. The research suggested that this may be partly because consumers have low awareness of the services it actually provides. In addition to providing general web-based information, consumers can also talk to trained experts about their personal circumstances over the phone and/or set up an appointment to do that face-to-face.

**Figure 4: Awareness of Pension Wise is most frequently attributed to above-the-line channels.**

Quant: 1 in 4 view the website but 3 in 4 had made no use of the service via any channel (Base: those aware of Pension Wise: 856).



There is scope for increasing both awareness of Pension Wise and the delivery channels through which it operates.

Understanding at this initial stage was often patchy and many doubted their ability to grasp the topic fully. Whilst some interviewees were thorough in their research and were well informed, many felt detached or avoided the detail due to lack of interest or were put off wading through the paperwork, feeling out of their depth.



I'm not terribly au fait with pensions. You get all this stuff and it is incomprehensible. You don't know until you organise an annuity. Is a drawdown the same as an annuity?



(Male, 65, £50k-£120k)

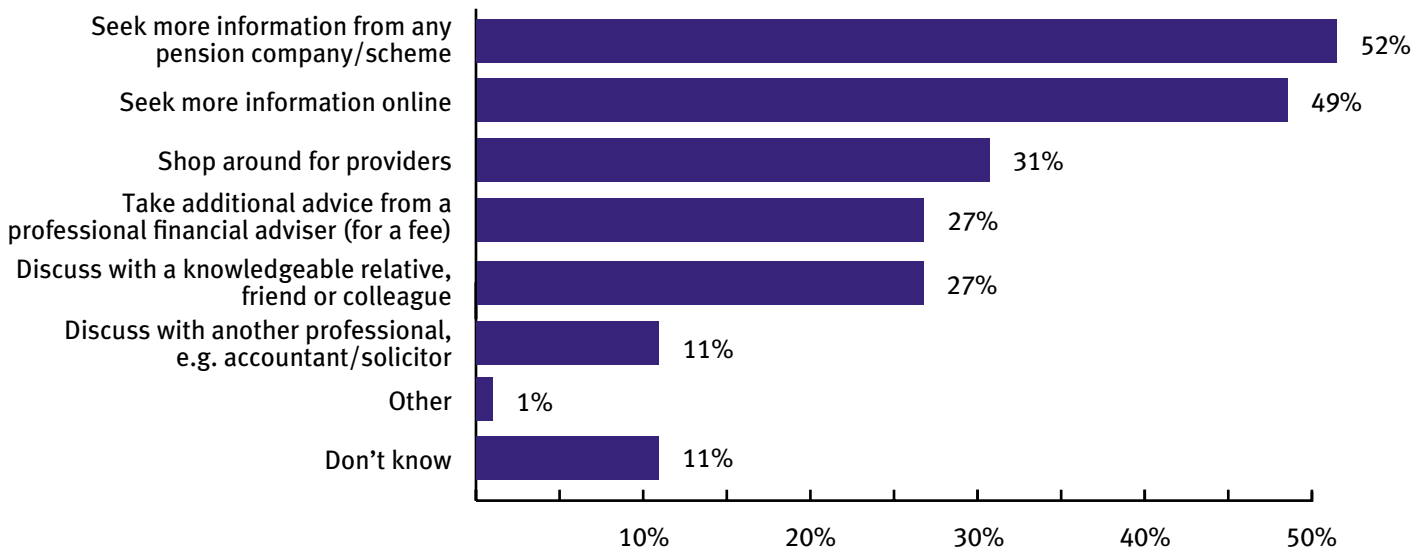
But there were some who were more flexible and resourceful and had the wherewithal and confidence to collect what they considered the 'right level of detail' to make a decision.

The experience of interviewees was that providers can easily strike the wrong tone and be seen as pushy – sales patter is very unwelcome at this stage. Rather, respondents were looking for:

- Impartial, high-level explanations – no fine detail or lengthy check lists
- The more obvious 'go-to' official sites (e.g. directgov) to provide must-know information and signposts to other sources
- Schematics and tools that aid understanding and save time and effort (e.g. flowcharts, simple illustrations/graphs)
- To 'get armed' with the basic facts before engaging with providers or financial advisers to avoid looking uninformed and being taken advantage of.

### Figure 5: After using Pension Wise, the majority will continue to collect information by contacting their provider or by browsing online.

Quant: Around 1 in 4 envisage taking paid-for advice from a professional financial Adviser or discussing with a knowledgeable third party (Base: 427).



This indicates that consumers 'position' Pension Wise at the early information-gathering stages. This has implications for targeting, i.e. to the widest audience and at a point when it could be relevant.

Qual: Pension Wise is likely to be considered as one of the starting points in the journey, followed up by a search for more detail on options and providers.



I rang [my provider]. All I needed was what I've got, and what's the best way to get at it. But they can be a bit pushy and try to sell to you – at that point I wanted to hang up.



Male, 61, £50k–£100k

Provider wake-up packs do not appear to be meeting consumer needs at this stage and are often dismissed by consumers as they:

- Are mistaken for an annual statement
- Often 'land' at the wrong time, missing the consumer's engagement time window
- Are too content heavy.

### Engagement with the detail

The interviews suggested that there is a further trigger for consumers to engage more fully with the detail required to inform their decision. This was strongly linked to life events and was often out of line with their previously nominated retirement date (NRD) given to the scheme or provider. Examples included:

- Leaving work
- A life-changing crunch points such as redundancy or illness
- A change in their partner's circumstances
- A DB pension reaching maturity well before State retirement, e.g. police or local authority
- Finally deciding to make that life change, e.g. downsizing or going part-time/reducing hours.

This stage **may or may not** be preceded by the initial fact-finding stage described above.

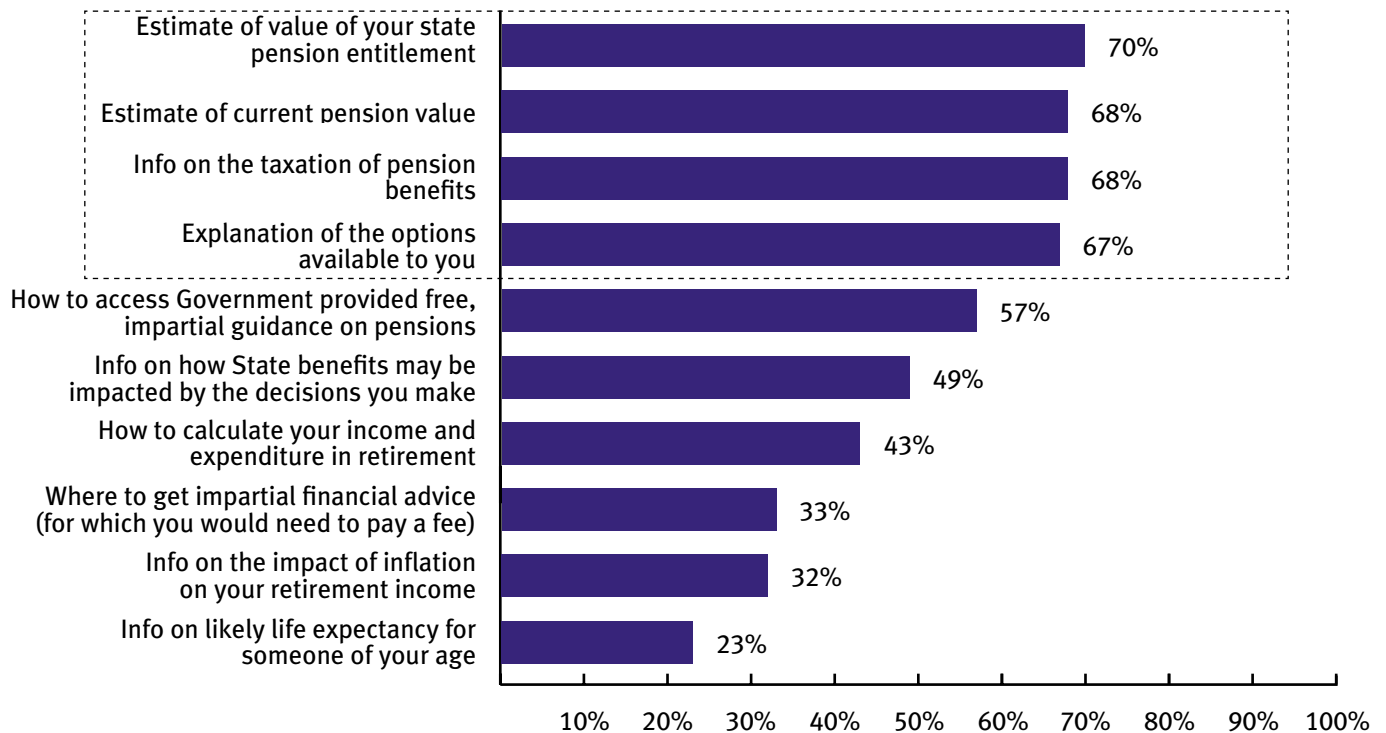
So a key message is that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach. The current process of pushing out information packs at 30 weeks and then 10 weeks from NRD doesn't fit into a world without a default annuity. Rather providers need to allow consumers to 'pull' detailed information when they need it, with 'push' communications being much earlier and at a much higher level, **communicating what support is available** and encouraging consumers to contact them when the consumer is ready to engage.

# 10 Consumers' decision making process under freedom and choice continued

At this detailed engagement stage, survey respondents said they wanted information that is relevant to them and that lead them to a finite set of viable options. The centrepiece is information that leads to an accurate estimate of retirement incomes and expenditures.

**Figure 6: At the engagement stage, consumers want information that is relevant to them and that leads to an accurate estimate of retirement incomes.**

Quant: Information on how to calculate income and expenditure in retirement (e.g. pension calculators) were deemed essential by 43% (Base: 445).



Qual: Many of the sources mentioned earlier are used but consumers are now more likely to go to sources who can feedback information based on their personal circumstances – FAs, knowledgeable third parties, etc.

At this stage, consumers want information from providers to lead them to a finite set of viable options. There is an opportunity for Pension Wise to promote how it can support this process, while reassuring consumers about its impartiality and staff credentials.

The interviewees confirmed that the provider literature does contain valuable information – the issue is that it does not always grab the user’s attention. The pensions valuation is a vital piece of data, but the packs are often found to be:

- Too generic;
- Too ‘marketing-like’ to be used as a reference; and
- Too content heavy.

After reading the literature, many interviewees were still unsure of:

- The full range of options available – e.g. that you can mix and match – often just understood at a high level
- The risks of keeping your assets invested
- Drawdown products – needs to be simplified and the risks spelt out
- Underlying assets – and the match with their risk profile
- Volatility – the impact of ups and downs in the market
- How different elements impact each other, e.g. State pension vs private, lump sum vs the remainder.

Interviewees thought more concise formats, signposting to relevant sections and the use of simple schematics (such as flowcharts) would help their engagement.



[Was it clear the main things they were trying to say?] Yes. It gave you the option of taking an annuity or some type of drawdown. I still didn't understand the drawdown so I had to ask somebody. The pack was clear but I still needed extra help...



(Female, 68, £50k–£120k)

Interviewees could recall that providers had communicated potential risks, telling them about:

- Shopping around
- Tax implications
- Range of options (high level)
- Pensions valuation may change and depends on date of enquiry
- Inflation
- Health/longevity

though with less recall of:

- Scams (though awareness was generally good through the media)
- Debt (and clearing of this).

But importantly, the interviewees generally did not expect providers to be giving this information – apart from the tax implications – and it was not high up their list of essential information needs.



There is a lot to read. I've been reading this on the train but my mind drifts.



(Female, 59, £10k–£50k)

This presents something of a challenge: risk warnings were seen to be best communicated when consumers are in the engagement stage of the process. Too much detail early in the process (when initially fact finding) or too late (once the decision has been made – as in the current 'second line of defence') means that it will not be assimilated by consumers. And there would appear to be a misalignment between the industry requirement to issue comprehensive consumer protection warnings and consumer ability to absorb this quantity of information.

## The final decision

Once reaching this final stage, the majority of interviewees just communicated their decision to their existing and chosen providers. There was little or no need for further information at this stage and little evidence of taking further advice at the levels of wealth present in this sample group. It was now too late to influence the decision or for risk warnings to be taken in.

But different personalities would complete this stage in different ways. Some procrastinated and left the decision to the last minute, some looked for easy interfaces and focused on straightforward products and options – or devolved to an Adviser. Others looked at a number of options and put off some decisions (if possible) until later. And some, after extensive research, chose an on-going solution using for example platforms and drawdown.

# 12 A support structure for consumers

The ideal support structure for consumers nearing retirement would provide an easy way to access information, to the required level of detail, when needed.

As there is not a single trigger or even a common time window within which consumers start considering their options, it is critical that information and support services are **communicated early and made available** to a wide audience. It is important not to limit communications to a restricted time window or traditional pre-retirement age brackets.

Without the framework of the default annuity, it is important that consumers can be the architect of their own decision making process, ‘self-directing’ their fact finding journey, with the option to access information on demand. As a result, their needs for information are unlikely to align with the current industry and regulatory processes for ‘pushing’ out information.

Rather, it may be better to look at an on-demand approach to providing information and support, placing emphasis on raising awareness of the channels available and the type of information they deliver. This also needs to ensure that key sources provide relevant links, one with another, especially for consumers moving from the initial to engaged stages. Ensuring consumers understand the capability of Pension Wise to help them with their own personal decision, rather just offering generic guidance, is an important piece of this picture.

So consumers will require information and guidance at two key stages, with different requirements at each of these stages, as set out below:

	Initial fact-finding stage	Engagement stage
<b>Needs:</b>	<p>Much earlier engagement by Government including a very simple ‘Introduction to your pension options’ highlighting the key principles to help frame their personal circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use simple graphics (e.g. flowcharts) to aid understanding of the process and eliminate need to take in irrelevant information</li> </ul>	Relevant information, answers to specific questions
<b>Expectations:</b>	Ideally led from an impartial (official) source, in simple language, concise and focused on what’s important	Qualified advice or guidance, relevance to personal situation
<b>Desired benefits:</b>	Being safeguarded from falling prey to non-impartial providers and/or overlooking better options through lack of knowledge	The ability to weigh the advantages and risks of different options
<b>Desired outcomes:</b>	To be ‘armed with information’ to look into the detail of their own personal situation AND approach less impartial organisations, e.g. providers.	Being able to make an informed decision; awareness of the key risks involved.

It may also be helpful to provide ‘multi-layer’ information options to meet the requirements of different consumer personalities and capabilities to engage with different levels of detail.



Providers are faced with a challenge in meeting the new demands of consumers under freedom and choice. The move of policy from a default to a much more active choice turns much of the traditional process of accessing DC pension assets on its head. Timing of decisions is driven now by consumers' life stage triggers rather than a nominated retirement date. The decision process has to accommodate a wide range of options and consumer decision-making preferences rather than triggering the issuance of a standardised annuity quotation and supporting information pack.

As a result, providers need to be **responsive to consumers' requests**, communicating what support is available early in the process and then:

- **Encouraging consumers to contact** the provider when they are ready and
- **Providing (only) the most relevant information**, responding to that consumer's needs and preferences.

The right interactions are key to helping consumers 'draw down' the information and guidance that meets their own decision-making process. To achieve this, provider staff need to be **trained and competent** to respond, in a way that is supportive – not 'salesy' or condescending – by:

- Understanding the journey each consumer is on to making their decision
- Having empathy with the challenges they face on the path they are taking
- Identifying clearly where consumers are on their journey and what information/guidance is most relevant to them at that point
- Allowing consumers to draw down as much or as little information as they need at each stage, whilst signposting where to find further help if/when needed
- Following up conversations with personalised written confirmation that is clear, concise and relevant
- Building trust and confidence so that consumers are comfortable returning as they need further information or guidance.

Provider processes and systems need to be supportive of staff building understanding with individual customers. Communications need to be tailored in content and timing to reflect where consumers actually are in the three stages of decision making. Staff need to:

- Be able to build their understanding of the individual's circumstances and preferences
- Be able to offer the right information and guidance
- Confirm appropriately in writing
- Pick up the threads of a conversation correctly and confidently when a consumer asks for more help.

# 14 The profession's response: why this research is important

This research has revealed some key insight into how the new pension freedoms environment is likely to impact consumers' thinking of pensions decumulation. This last section strives to consider the implications on professionals working within the pensions sector, particularly those serving or overseeing the service to consumers themselves. These issues are especially important given the political and regulatory context in which these reforms are happening, not least the two other major activities that were going on at the time this report was published. First is the fundamental rethink of pensions and long term savings distribution that is the Government's Financial Advice Market Review. Second is the Treasury's separate but linked consultation on public financial guidance that will ultimately impact Pension Wise and how this is promoted and delivered.

Our research here has revealed a number of key characteristics that consumers as a whole have adopted in approaching their retirement funding. In effect, the new pension freedoms has resulted in a "new normal" in retirement planning:

## New flexibilities mean that there is no longer any set path that consumers will take

Prior to the pension freedoms coming into force, consumers above the trivial commutation minima were broadly speaking limited to a rather set-piece approach of annuitising. Now, this "freedom and choice" opens up a plethora of different paths to most people. It also distinguishes the different pension pots themselves, allowing consumers to, for example, cash in small DC pots and leave larger ones.

## How and when they access their pensions is now unique

So this range of choice combined with all the other developments in retirement described above also means there is no single trigger to retirement, not even a common time window. In keeping with the realisation that, for many, retirement will be an evolution rather than a revolution; the old trigger points for retirement are no longer. So concepts like "normal retirement date", and the process of receiving information as though it was a particular watershed event are no longer valid. The pension freedoms take effect from age 55, and Pension Wise itself can now be accessed from age 50. It means that providers have to be more savvy about anticipating the actual juncture at which people will start to consider retirement.

## Information itself a "draw down" versus "lump sum"


This lack of set-piece approach to retirement coupled with a more process rather than watershed orientation means that consumers' very approach to gathering the information they need is also changing. This will be more complex from the perspective of providers giving it. Gone are "wake-up packs" denoting a single fixed retirement date, that meted out a behemoth "lump sum" of information in one eye-watering place, and instead is an information has to be "drawn down" when needed and not before. Whether or not consumers are methodical in their thinking, our research suggests they will all approach retirement in a similar way across three broadly-defined phases:

- Initial fact-finding
- Engagement
- Final decision.

Each phase has its unique information characteristics, and managing the delivery of this information has to be done in a way that neither leaves them in the dark nor overwhelms them which is equally debilitating.

## The “new normal”: implications for provider employees and professionalism

This ‘new normal’ results in significant new demands for professionals working in the life, pensions and long-term savings sector which in turn mean a more complex training requirement. For example, the very act of initially reaching out to a customer in the right time and manner to satisfy their initial fact-finding stage demands while conveying that more detailed information can be made available at the customer’s leisure requires a particular and unique set of skills.

What consumers want		So staff need to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For their journey towards making a decision to be understood</li> <li>• Having empathy with the challenges they face on the path they are taking</li> <li>• Customers to understand where they are in their journey and what information/guidance is most relevant to them at that point</li> <li>• Ability to “draw down” as much or as little information as they need at each stage, whilst knowing where to look for further help if/when needed</li> <li>• Follow-up conversations with personalised written confirmation that is clear, concise and relevant</li> <li>• Trust and confidence to be able to return for more information and guidance.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailor their communications in content and timing to reflect where consumers actually are in the three stages of decision making</li> <li>• Be able to build their understanding of the individuals’ circumstances and preferences</li> <li>• Be able to offer the right information and guidance</li> <li>• Pick up the threads of a conversation correctly and confidently when a consumer asks for more help</li> <li>• Confirm appropriately in writing.</li> </ul>

As the leading professional body in the area of pensions and long-term savings, the Chartered Insurance Institute has been engaging with leaders from the major pensions and long-term savings providers. We have formed a steering group to oversee the development of improved and more consistent standards at all levels within these businesses, particularly among customer-facing staff.

This research project has done much to inform our work in this area, and responds to the significant changes the sector has seen over recent years, not least the Government’s pension reforms. We are now developing a ‘public declaration’ to which providers will commit, and this sets out a framework of professional standards that they will need to achieve voluntarily. We plan to launch this with several large providers early in 2016.

We believe this work will help to ensure that the sector develops the skill sets required to support the ‘new normal’ of the pension and long-term savings landscape and to meet future consumer needs in this new environment.

# 16 Appendix 1: Research objectives and methodology

## Objectives

The research was commissioned from NMG Consulting by CII/PFS as a follow up to research carried out in the summer of 2013 to explore consumers' attitudes towards and requirement of *guaranteed guidance*.

The objectives of the second phase of research, carried out in autumn 2015, were to:

- Understand **how well the system delivered for the launch of Pension Freedoms** is meeting consumer needs
- Assess **consumers' experiences of the new process** – particularly the revised communications from pension providers
- Understand the **extent to which they feel well informed on the choices** and services available to assist them (from pension providers, financial advisers, Pension Wise, etc.)
- Establish the **extent to which they are using these services** to arrive at the best course of action for them
- Understand **any risks to good outcomes** and how better results may be achieved.

## Methodology

A mix of qualitative and quantitative research was undertaken with pre-retired and recently retired consumers.

All participants were holders of one or more DC pensions with combined pots worth £5,000 or more. Those with a DB scheme only and/or an ongoing relationship with a financial adviser were screened out.

The qualitative phase ran from 17 September to 15 October 2015 and consisted 30 face-to-face in depth interviews with consumers who:

- Were a mix of those up to 12 months from retirement and those who retired up to 6 months ago
- Hold one or more DC pensions with pot sizes of £10,000–£50,000 or £50,000–£120,000

The quantitative phase ran from 16–26 September 2015 and consisted of 1,005 15-minute on-line questionnaires from respondents with the following characteristics:

- All aged 50+; 66% men, 34% women
- All were within five years of retirement: 16% within 12 months, 35% in 1–3 years, 42% in 3–5 years
- Pension values: 5% between £5,000 and £9,000; 19% between £10,000 and £29,999; 39% between £30,000 and £100,000; 31% hold >£100k
- Regional spread
- Those with >£100k in investable assets (excluding their residential property) were screened out.


## Technical appendix

Please note that a full technical appendix of the findings prepared by NMG, including all the charts from the research plus the questionnaire and case studies, is available to download from our website: <http://bit.ly/1L2vdba>

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