

It's worth taking some time to find out more about the different types of pensions that are available to you and how they work. Citizens Advice offers guidance about these www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/pensions/

It is important to get advice or guidance. If you want financial advice, you should take the time to find a registered and qualified financial adviser to investigate pension or investment opportunities.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/getting-financial-advice/

People who are considering pension plans or unlocking pensions for investment opportunities should be aware of scammers who operate in this area. Some warning signs that offers may be a scam include:

- Contact out of the blue, offering exceptional returns on investments.
- Collective investment schemes that require you and a group of people to invest and maintain a project.
- Early equity release schemes.
- Land investment schemes offer development opportunities with high returns.
- Time-limited offers.

Take steps to avoid the scammers:

- Be wary about calls out of the blue, and don't engage in any discussions with these callers.
- Check for language such as 'loophole', 'pension liberation' or 'guaranteed returns.' These can be warning signs of a scam.
- Don't be rushed into signing up, even if you think you might miss out on a good deal.
- Check the Financial Conduct Authority register for regulated companies. www.fca.org.uk/firms/financial-services-register and also their Scams smart investor page <https://www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart>
- Pensionwise and other government-backed bodies will not call you or text you with offers to review your pension.
- Contact Pensionwise for an appointment to get more information about pensions and your pension. www.pensionwise.gov.uk/en

- Do not provide personal details or bank details straight away. Again take time to check that they are a genuine company regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Also, check what protection might be available for your pension pot if something goes wrong.
- Scammers may imply that they know you have a friend that has signed up for the investment opportunity. By using common names to create familiarity or trust, such as “John said this investment would be great for you” or “your friend Claire has signed up and thought you would like to too.” Do not engage with the caller.

For further information

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/check-if-something-might-be-a-scam/

If you think a company is deliberately misleading consumers or using aggressive or intimidating practices, you can report them to your local Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice consumer helpline 0808 223 1133, Welsh-speaking adviser 0808 223 1144.

Relay UK - if you can't hear or speak on the phone, you can type what you want to say: 18001 then 0808 223 1133.