Property wealth, the great intergenerational transfer, and why advisers can’t ignore equity release

The UK is seeing one of the largest intergenerational wealth transfers in history. Over the coming decades, trillions of pounds are expected to pass between generations and much of this wealth sits in property rather than pensions or savings.

Property wealth makes up around 40% of total household wealth in Great Britain. For many clients aged 55 and over, their home is their biggest asset.

This creates a clear advice gap. Many older clients are asset rich but cash constrained, while younger generations face growing barriers to home ownership. For advisers, this is a moment to step in and help clients make better use of the wealth they already hold.

The challenge: wealth tied up in property

Clients are living longer and their financial needs are becoming more complex. At the same time, more are choosing to support family later in life, often when their own income is under pressure.

Common challenges include:

- Downsizing is not always practical or desirable
- Pension income may not stretch to cover lifestyle ambitions
- Clients want to gift during their lifetime but can’t easily access capital

At the same time, inheritance and gifting are playing a bigger role in financial planning. This makes early, joined-up advice more important than ever.

The opportunity: introducing equity release as part of the conversation

Equity release has evolved and is now a more flexible option that can support a range of planning needs, when used appropriately.

For some clients, it can supplement retirement income and let them help children or grandchildren onto the property ladder. They can also use it to plan for potential tax liabilities or fund care, home improvements or later life goals.

We are also seeing more customers use equity release to provide financial support to family while they are still alive, rather than waiting to pass on wealth later.

This is where advisers like you can add real value by bringing property wealth into the wider financial plan.

A practical example

A couple in their late 60s decide to release a modest amount of equity from their home. They use part of the funds to help their daughter with a house deposit and keep the remainder as a financial safety net.

If structured appropriately, gifts may fall outside of the estate for inheritance tax purposes if the clients survive seven years.

This approach lets them support their family now while keeping flexibility for their own future needs, all without having to move home.

Why advisers should act now

Demand for later life lending continues to grow, with equity release lending reaching £2.57 billion in 2025.

This reflects a shift in how clients view their housing wealth. It is no longer just something to pass on, but something they can use to improve financial outcomes today.

Advisers who engage with equity release can:

- deliver more holistic and relevant advice
- build stronger relationships across generations
- respond to changing client expectations.

Equity release is becoming a more mainstream part of financial planning. Advisers who include it in their toolkit are better placed to meet client needs.

Keeping customer outcomes front of mind

As with any recommendation, equity release needs careful consideration because it's not suitable for everyone.

As an adviser, you need to make sure you:

- carry out a full assessment of the client's needs and circumstances
- clearly explain the risks and long term impact
- consider alternative options before making a recommendation.

When used in the right way, equity release can play an important role in supporting good customer outcomes and long term financial wellbeing.

Take the next step with Aviva

If you're not already including equity release in your conversations, now is a good time to start. Explore how Aviva can support you and your clients, with tools, insights and product information designed for advisers.

To find out more and see how you can make property wealth part of your advice conversations today, visit our equity release page.