Newsletter

Winter 2026

Celebrating a Year of Growth

Our end-of-financial-year gathering was an opportunity to celebrate a significant year of growth, including coming together under Stonehouse Wealth Management and welcoming new advisers, team members and clients. Through global uncertainty and business change, our team remained focused on supporting our clients, strengthening our foundations and working together for the year ahead.

52 Ashmore Road Bundall, Gold Coast QLD

A New Home for Stonehouse on the Gold Coast

We are pleased to announce the opening of our new Gold Coast office on Ashmore Road in Bundall. This new location provides our growing local team with a welcoming and professional space to meet with clients, work together and continue supporting the Gold Coast community.

The move reflects the continued growth of Stonehouse Wealth Management and our commitment to being accessible to the clients and families we serve. We look forward to welcoming clients to the new office and building on the strong relationships our Gold Coast advisers and support team have developed over many years.

Miriam Harris

Welcoming the Stonehouse Accounting Team

We are delighted to welcome Miriam Harris and the Stonehouse Accounting team to the broader Stonehouse Group.

Led by Miriam, an experienced Chartered Accountant, the team provides accounting, taxation, bookkeeping and SMSF administration services. The addition of Stonehouse Accounting allows clients to access a broader range of professional services while continuing to choose the providers who are right for them.

Financial planning and accounting remain separate professional services, but having the teams working closely together can make it easier to share information, coordinate key deadlines and support clients with the financial and administrative matters that often overlap.

We are excited to have Miriam and the team join us and look forward to introducing them to more of our clients in the months ahead.

Superannuation: more relevant than ever

Declan Baker
Senior Partner

A range of superannuation changes that came into effect on 1 July 2026 are reinforcing the role of super as one of the most tax-effective investment structures available.

For many investors, it's not simply that super remains attractive but that the rules continue to change. Understanding these changes can help ensure your strategy takes advantage of available opportunities while staying on track with your financial goals.

A changing tax environment

Outside of super, tighter rules around the use of discretionary trusts and closer scrutiny of income distributions have reduced some traditional tax planning flexibility. Combined with the ongoing treatment of capital gains, this has made tax outcomes in non-super structures less predictable for some investors.[i] In contrast, superannuation continues to provide favourable tax treatment. This is a key reason why super is becoming increasingly important in long-term financial planning.

Payday Super – boost your retirement savings

Payday Super requires employers to make superannuation guarantee contributions with each pay cycle rather than quarterly.[ii] The legislation commenced from 1 July 2026. While this is primarily an administrative shift, it may have a meaningful impact on individuals' super balances. More frequent contributions mean compounding begins earlier. Over time, this could lead to improved retirement outcomes.

Higher contribution caps create more opportunities

From 1 July 2026, the concessional superannuation contribution cap (including employer contributions and salary sacrifice) increased to $32,500 from $30,000 in the 2025-2026 financial year.

Non-concessional caps have also increased, from $120,000 in 2025-2026 to $130,000 in the 2026-2027 financial year, enabling larger after-tax contributions. This can be particularly relevant for individuals who have accumulated savings outside super and wish to transfer funds into a more tax-advantaged environment.[iii]

Carry-forward and bring-forward rules

Two existing rules continue to offer significant opportunities when used effectively.[iv]

The carry-forward rule allows those with a total super balance below $500,000 on 30 June in the previous financial year to use unused concessional cap amounts from previous years. This can be especially beneficial for those with irregular income patterns, such as business owners or individuals returning to work after a break.

The bring-forward rule allows you to make several years' worth of non-concessional contributions in one year, subject to eligibility criteria. This can be particularly useful when receiving an inheritance, selling an asset or restructuring investments.

Parental leave contributions

Another important development is the introduction of superannuation contributions on government-funded Paid Parental Leave payments from 1 July 2025. It recognises the long-term impact that time out of the workforce can have on retirement savings, particularly for women.[v] While the financial impact may appear modest in the short term, over time the effect of compounding can be meaningful.

Division 296 tax

One of the more widely discussed measures is the Division 296 tax, which applies an additional tax on earnings associated with super balances above $3 million.[vi]

While this affects a relatively small proportion of investors, it represents an important shift in the superannuation landscape. The measure is designed to target very large balances, with the objective of limiting the extent of tax concessions at higher levels of wealth.

Transfer Balance Cap increase to $2.1 million

The increase in the Transfer Balance Cap to $2.1 million is another positive development, particularly for those approaching or entering retirement.

This cap determines how much can be transferred into the tax-free retirement phase. An increase allows more capital to benefit from a zero per cent tax rate on earnings, enhancing after-tax income in retirement.

Bringing it all together

Superannuation continues to offer a compelling tax environment, particularly when compared with other investment strategies that are facing increased complexity and scrutiny.

Contribution caps, along with carry forward and bring forward rules, provide multiple pathways to build super balances over time. Changes such as Payday Super and parental leave contributions highlight the benefits of regular, ongoing investment into super and the power of compounding. While new measures such as Division 296 introduce additional considerations, they do not diminish the overall value of super for most investors.

Please get in touch if you'd like to discuss any of these superannuation options.

i https://treasury.gov.au/publication/p2026-781365
ii https://www.fairwork.gov.au/newsroom/news/payday-super-new-rules-starting-1-july-2026
iii-vi https://www.ato.gov.au/

Investing for the next generation

Kane Livingstone
Senior Partner

For many, the goal of investing is about creating wealth for a comfortable financial future, as well as a legacy that supports your children and grandchildren for decades to come.

But one of the greatest risks to that legacy can be the challenge of dealing with sudden wealth. When adult children inherit large sums or significant assets without preparation, sometimes the result is family tension, poor decisions or erosion of wealth.

While precise figures vary, research and industry experience consistently show that many families struggle to preserve wealth beyond the second and third generations, largely due to behavioural and governance challenges rather than investment performance.

Building financial literacy

Financial capability is developed over years of exposure, education, and experience.

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) MoneySmart program emphasises that financial literacy is a core life skill, not simply a technical ability.

While an inheritance may be some years off, parents who are expecting to pass on some form of an inheritance should begin involving their children in financial discussions where appropriate. This might include reviewing investment portfolios together, explaining the complexities of how superannuation works or discussing the rationale behind major financial decisions. Understanding investment risk and the associated tax obligations is also essential to developing a complete financial picture.

Practical experience is just as important as theory. Allowing adult children to manage a portion of investments, under guidance, can build confidence and accountability. This phased approach reduces the risk of overwhelm later, when financial responsibility increases significantly.

Gifting or lending?

Another important consideration when supporting the next generation is whether to provide financial assistance as a gift or a loan. The decision has both ethical and practical implications.

Gifting can provide immediate support without the burden of repayment, allowing children to purchase a home, invest or establish a business. But unequal gifting among siblings may create perceptions of favouritism, even if the intention is fair. Clear communication and documentation of the reasoning behind decisions is essential.

Lending, on the other hand, can maintain a sense of responsibility and fairness.

Loans structured with clear terms can encourage financial discipline and avoid creating dependency. Families often formalise the arrangements with written agreements that set expectations for repayments and interest. There are also taxation and legal considerations.

The Australian Taxation Office may assess certain arrangements differently depending on whether funds are genuinely gifted or loaned. Professional legal, tax and financial advice can help make sure the arrangement is properly documented and reflects the family's intentions. The choice between gifting and lending will depend on the recipient's financial maturity, the family's circumstances and the broader estate plan. Legal and tax advice should be obtained before establishing family loans, trusts or gifting arrangements.

Preparing the next generation beyond money

Financial preparation alone is not enough. Inheriting wealth also involves emotional and behavioural readiness.

Open conversations about wealth, values and expectations are important. This includes explaining the purpose of wealth, whether it is to provide security, support philanthropy or create opportunities for future generations.

Governance structures, such as family meetings, investment committees or advisory boards can also help heirs understand their roles and responsibilities and encourage collaboration.

Philanthropy is another powerful tool for preparing heirs. Involving children in charitable giving decisions can instil a sense of social responsibility. It reinforces the idea that wealth is not solely for personal use, but also a resource to benefit the broader community.

Managing the transition

Gradual transition strategies can ease the adjustment for both parents and children.

This might involve progressively transferring control of assets. For example, adult children may first participate in decision-making, then take on increasing responsibility for managing investments over time. Trust structures are often used for staged distributions, allowing flexibility and protection.

Regular reviews are equally important. As family circumstances change, so too should the plan. Marriage, divorce, business ventures or health issues can all affect how wealth should be managed and transferred.

A legacy of capability

Successful intergenerational wealth transfer is not measured by the size of the inheritance but by the preparedness of those who receive it. Financial literacy, decision-making and open communication are the foundations of lasting wealth. By investing time in educating and including the next generation, families can reduce the risks associated with sudden wealth and create a legacy that endures.

If you'd like to discuss how to prepare your family for a successful wealth transition, we're here to help.

Making the most of **three hours of free daytime power**

From 1 July 2026, eligible households in South East Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia may be able to access three hours of free electricity each day under the Australian Government's new **Solar Sharer Offer**.

The offer is designed to help households make better use of Australia's abundant daytime solar energy. During the middle of the day, solar generation is often high and demand on the electricity grid is lower. By encouraging households to use more power during this period, the initiative aims to reduce pressure on the evening peak and help participating households lower their electricity bills.

For many retirees, this could be a practical opportunity. Retirees are often at home during the day and may have more flexibility to shift household jobs into the free power window.

In South East Queensland and New South Wales, the free power period is expected to be **11am to 2pm**. In South Australia, it is expected to be **12pm to 3pm**.

You do not need to have rooftop solar to participate. The offer is intended to be available to eligible renters and homeowners, provided they have a smart meter and are with a retailer required to offer the plan.

Practical ways to use the free power window

Small changes to daily routines may help households get more value from the offer. Consider using the free period to:

- run the washing machine or dishwasher
- use the clothes dryer where needed
- run pool pumps
- heat hot water, where your system allows it
- charge batteries, mobility devices or an electric vehicle
- pre-heat or cool the home before the evening peak
- use timers on appliances so they run during the free period, even if you are out

For retirees, the biggest benefit may come from moving regular household tasks out of the morning and evening and into the middle of the day.

Check the details before switching

While three hours of free electricity sounds attractive, it is worth checking the full plan before opting in.

The free electricity only applies during the set three-hour window and is subject to a daily usage cap. You will still pay your daily supply charge and for any electricity used outside the free period. In some cases, the rates outside the free period may be higher than your current plan.

Before changing plans,
ask your electricity retailer:

1. Am I eligible for the Solar Sharer Offer?
2. Do I have a smart meter?
3. What are the rates outside the free power period?
4. What is the daily supply charge?
5. Is there a better offer available for my household usage pattern?
6. Can I leave the plan if it does not suit me?

A simple winter tip

Winter energy costs can creep up quickly, particularly where heating, hot water and drying clothes are used more often. If you are eligible, the Solar Sharer Offer may help reduce costs by moving some of this usage into the middle of the day.

As with any household bill, the best approach is to check the numbers, compare your options and choose the plan that suits how you actually use electricity.

A small change to when you run appliances could make a useful difference over the year.

This is general information only and does not consider your personal circumstances. Clients should contact their electricity retailer or use a government energy comparison service before changing plans.

Building a Stronger Team for Our Clients

Our advisers recently came together to share knowledge, discuss ideas and continue developing the way we support our clients.

These gatherings give our team an opportunity to learn from one another, reflect on what clients value most and explore how we can continue improving the advice and service we provide.

While our advisers work across different locations and bring a wide range of experience, they share a common commitment to helping clients make informed decisions and feel confident about their financial future.

Learning from the Greats

Members of our team enjoyed an inspiring State of Origin lunch, with the opportunity to meet sporting legends, build new connections and hear valuable insights into leadership, teamwork and creating a winning culture.

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