

Are we entering an investment bond renaissance?

Exploring why they are an attractive option to mass-affluent investors

Onshore investment bonds typically carry a lower risk and contribute significantly to a well-rounded portfolio. Historically, numerous investors have opted for a 60% equities and 40% bonds split in their portfolios, as these two assets often (keep in mind, not always) exhibit contrasting performances under varying economic circumstances – a beneficial attribute during market volatility.

Following the Capital Gains Tax (CGT) changes announced in last year's November Autumn Statement, many investors are likely considering investment bonds a more attractive option. The Chancellor's decision to reduce the CGT allowance to £6,000 this year and to £3,000 in April 2024 means investment bonds are more attractive to mass-affluent investors who previously held money in OEICs and unit trusts.

INVESTMENT BONDS OFFER SEVERAL BENEFITS:

- Onshore bonds are not liable to CGT. Onshore bonds are treated as having already paid 20% tax on any gains when calculating a chargeable gain. In reality, the tax deducted is likely to be less than this.
- They can be ideal for Inheritance Tax (IHT) planning and are exempt from IHT after seven years if held in a trust.
- Investors can withdraw up to 5% of their initial investment annually without triggering a chargeable event or any immediate tax liability.
- Top slicing relief is available to reduce tax liability, which can eliminate or significantly

reduce any tax liability when a chargeable event is incurred – helpful if investors are in the accumulation phase and are preparing for retirement (maybe a higher rate taxpayer while owning the bond, but a basic rate taxpayer when encashing).

- There are options to assign a bond (for example, between husband and wife as a genuine gift). For tax purposes, the assignment will generally be treated as if the new owner had always owned it – if one is a basic rate taxpayer, they could have no tax to pay on encashment.

HAVE YOU EXHAUSTED YOUR OTHER TAX ALLOWANCES?

Changes to CGT and the tax-free dividend allowances are also likely to appeal to investors looking to reduce IHT liabilities and those who have used their Individual Savings Account (ISA) allowances or received a large windfall payment. ■

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT INVESTMENT BONDS?

If you would like to arrange a no-obligation consultation to discover your investment options, please get in touch with us to discuss your distinct needs. We're looking forward to hearing from you.

THIS ARTICLE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE TAX OR LEGAL ADVICE AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON AS SUCH.

THE VALUE OF YOUR INVESTMENTS CAN GO DOWN AS WELL AS UP AND YOU MAY GET BACK LESS THAN YOU INVESTED.

THE TAX TREATMENT IS DEPENDENT ON INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE IN FUTURE. FOR GUIDANCE, SEEK PROFESSIONAL ADVICE.