

Welcome to our summer newsletter

Gender Pricing

If you need life or critical illness insurance, or income protection cover, make sure you contact me by November at the latest. The cost of new cover is expected to go up at the end of the year.

Historically, life insurance premiums have been falling for most of the last 30 years thanks to rising life expectancy and increased competition in the industry, but that trend is now set to reverse. Why? Well traditionally, women and men have always been charged different premiums for different types of cover. That is because the risk of covering an average woman and an average man for different things, well, differs!

However, the EU has ruled that insurance companies cannot discriminate, or price on the grounds of gender from the 21st December 2012. Most life companies are sending me correspondence stating that they expect the cost of Life & Critical Illness for women to increase by up to 15% and Income Protection for men to increase by up to 40% with effect the cut off point.

This means that anyone wanting cover would be well advised to arrange it (*call me!*) in plenty of time before hand. Any new cover needs to be in force prior to the 21st December so don't forget that whilst sometimes cover can be agreed within minutes of applying, it is also sometimes necessary for life

companies to obtain additional information prior to this (i.e. extra info from client or their GP).

To be clear this does not mean that the cost of cover that you already have may increase or decrease in cost, simply that the cost of new cover is expected to become more expensive. Of course not only does this mean it is now the time to buy cover, but also even more important that the cover you already have does not lapse.

Call me and I will be happy to review your needs, looking at any existing cover that is in place (whether we arranged it or not) and recommend and guide you through the process of arranging cover for any agreed shortfalls.

Interest Rates

At the time of writing the base rate had still not changed but whilst there are still some very good rates on offer (3.39% 5 year fixed anyone?) there have been some rate increases in the last few months. The banks and building societies are still limiting their lending to some extent and the main way of doing so is to limit the higher percentage loans by charging higher rates and giving less overall choice of schemes.

The market is still plodding along though with people still moving home (I would estimate the same level as last year) but

with a bit more remortgage activity seen by us than in the last 2 years or so. It seems people are generally becoming more keen to get onto a fixed rate as time goes on.

I have given up trying to predict interest rates but would re-iterate that those still sitting on variable rates be careful that they judge the point to move off them very carefully so that they don't get caught out. I am happy to hear from anyone as frequently as they see fit to discuss this and keep individual options under review.



Finally, a thanks to those of you who do!



As I always say in these newsletters, we are grateful for any referrals and repeat business you give us. There is nothing more reassuring than getting a recommendation from someone or a call from a client we haven't spoken to in five years. Please remember us and the fact that I will always try to do the best by anyone we deal with. I try to be 'long haul' rather than 'quick buck'.

As always, please call me to discuss anything at all, really **I would rather you called me to discuss something than assume I can't help (or wouldn't want to).**

I can always be called on **07710 770969** or emailed at **advice@sbms-online.co.uk**

Best regards,

Stuart

A lot has been going on since the last newsletter in December... we have been camping twice. First in April (when hail brought a new experience to being in a tent!) and then in June where a combination of pitching 10 metres from the sea wall and the wind that came over it, gave us reason to be nervous. It's all good fun though and we are hoping for some better weather in the next month for another trip. Here's hoping there will be a break in the wet weather.



The village had another street party with the Jubilee celebrations, giving Sharon another excuse to mingle, eat and get merry! We had party games, a BBQ, music and everyone in the village took along cakes and other food.

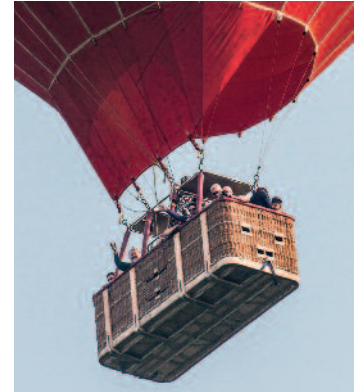


Emily has started at Brownies, and both Emily and Lucy are still learning to swim. Emily has got to stage 4 after getting her 5 and 10 metre swimming badges (better than I remember I was at 7 years old). Both the girls are due to move up another year at school (to years 2 and 3 respectively) and they both recently took part in a 'recorder' recital in school assembly meaning both did 'solos' in front of the rest of the school.

Lucy's friend Martha has been teaching her yoga (I'm still waiting to meet her mother) and both have recently had new 'big girl' bikes and helmets (the first paid for, proper bikes for each of them so a big event for two little girls!).

Oh and mum achieved one of her "to do's" and went up in a balloon aged 76!

*Anyway best wishes to each of you and your families...
the Brown's*



A rural story but for some it might sound familiar in an office setting..! A man owned a small farm in Devon. HM Revenue & Customs claimed he was not paying proper wages to his staff and sent a representative out to interview him. "I need a list of your employees and how much you pay them" demanded the representative. "Well", replied the farmer, "there's my farm hand who's been with me for 3 years. I pay him £200 a week plus free room and board. The cook has been here for 18 months, and I pay her £150 per week plus free room and board." "Then there's the half-wit. He works about 18 hours every day and does about 90% of all the work around here. He makes about £10 per week, pays his own room and board, and I buy him a bottle of whiskey every Saturday night. He also sleeps with my wife occasionally." "That's the guy I want to talk to, the half-wit", says the agent. "That would be me", replied the farmer.

98% of British drivers say: 'Oh s**t' before going in the ditch on a slippery road. The other 2% are from Dorset and Somerset and they say: "Hold my cider and watch this."

Man lost in a hot air balloon over Ireland. He looks down and sees a farmer and shouts to him, "Where am I?"

The Irish farmer looks up and shouts back "You can't kid me, you're in that flippin' basket!"

I asked my boss if I could leave half an hour early. He said, "Only if you make up the time." I said, "OK. It's 35 past 50. Can I go now?"

As a reminder of the services we offer:

- Independent mortgage advice
- Independent insurance advice including:
 - Life Assurance
 - Critical Illness
 - Accident and Sickness
 - Unemployment
 - Income Protection
 - Private Medical Insurance
- Buildings and contents insurance
- We can recommend Conveyancer, Solicitor and EPC provider
- IFA services including pensions and investments
- Loans - secured and unsecured APRs dependent on term, amount and circumstances. Quotes on request
- Will service
- Commercial and business enquires
- Debt management and IVA advice
- Credit file service
- Buy and rent back schemes

**FOR ANY FINANCIAL ADVICE
PLEASE CONTACT US ON**

Hertfordshire Office: **01442 252 040**
Bedfordshire Office: **01525 877 650**
Mobile: **07710 770 969**