

# GETTING YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER

If you're planning your retirement, a trusted financial adviser can make sure you're heading in the right direction. With the help of Shane Foster at Lifestyle Financial Services, you'll have the guidance you need to stay on track for a secure future.

## Clearing debt

Allan and Deb Watkins from Newcastle have been clients of Shane Foster's since 2012. At that time Allan, a management accountant, had just turned 55 and was looking for some financial advice to help him and Deb prepare for retirement.

"We wanted someone to put our investments into perspective so we could work out the best option for our super," Allan said. "We told Shane what we wanted to do when we retire and the level of income we were hoping for."

Shane reviewed the Watkins' financial situation and saw that their current spending was too high for them to achieve their goals by the time they'd hoped to. Also, even though they'd already paid off their house, they'd used their mortgage redraw facility to fund some home renovations.

Allan commented; "Shane explained the best approach for us to become debt free and get to the point we wanted to be at financially by the time I retired."

The first part of Shane's strategy was to put a household budget in place so Allan and Deb could keep their spending under control. He also recommended that they cash in some shares to help pay off their debt as quickly as possible.

Through Shane's clear explanation of the proposed strategy, Allan and Deb had a better understanding of what they needed to do to reach their goals.

"I like Shane's approach and his manner," said Allan.

"Whenever we talk, he knows where I'm coming from and I know where he's coming from. We're definitely on the same wavelength."

## Building wealth

With their debt cleared, Allan and Deb were free to focus on maximising their super while Allan was still working. This involved increasing Allan's contributions through his existing salary sacrifice arrangement. By taking advantage of contribution splitting rules for spouses, he was able to use part of his contributions to boost Deb's super as well.



Deb and Allan Watkins on their new property

Following Shane's advice, Allan and Deb also rebalanced their super so it was invested more conservatively, which ensured that the level of risk they were exposed to was appropriate for their stage in life.

Once their kids had grown up, Allan and Deb were also looking to downsize. They were recently able to sell their house and move into their dream home beside a golf course. They're also looking forward to enjoying some overseas travel in the near future.

Best of all, thanks to Shane's guidance, Allan's and Deb's super is continuing to grow at a healthy rate and Allan is on track to retire within the next few years,

"Deb and I both have 100% per cent confidence in Shane's advice – he's totally professional and we've never doubted any of the investment advice he's given us," said Allan.

"If anyone I know is thinking about getting a financial adviser, I recommend Shane to them on the basis that I use him personally," he added. "I wouldn't recommend Shane unless I was absolutely confident in his advice."

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