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INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this book is to guide the reader through the maze of personal financial decisions which he or she or the family might have to make during a lifetime.

I have concentrated heavily on specific areas such as pensions, savings and insurance, because these are areas which will have the most effect on you during the course of your working life. There are also frequent references to financial advisors, ranging from the independent advisor to those employed by institutions such as banks. I have made repeated references because very often you will receive advice from such a person and will make decisions based on that advice.

As an individual, you could spend untold hours the various options open to you with regard to financial matters, only to find yourself more confused than ever due to conflicting advice received along the way. That advice will, quite often, be made in the best interests of the advisor, and his or her subsequent commissions, rather than in the best interests of yourself.

A Straightforward Guide to Individual and Family Finances will set out, in a clear and unambiguous way, the meaning and implications of the various financial options open to you, and should leave you in a better position to make an informed choice.

The main areas covered by the book are mortgages, life insurance, savings, investments, income protection, pensions, tax wills and trusts, other personal options for investment such as stocks and shares. In addition, I have covered education, health care, weddings and funerals.

Because of the importance of receiving accurate advice from financial advisors, the book will begin by outlining the law that governs such advisors and also the types of advice given.