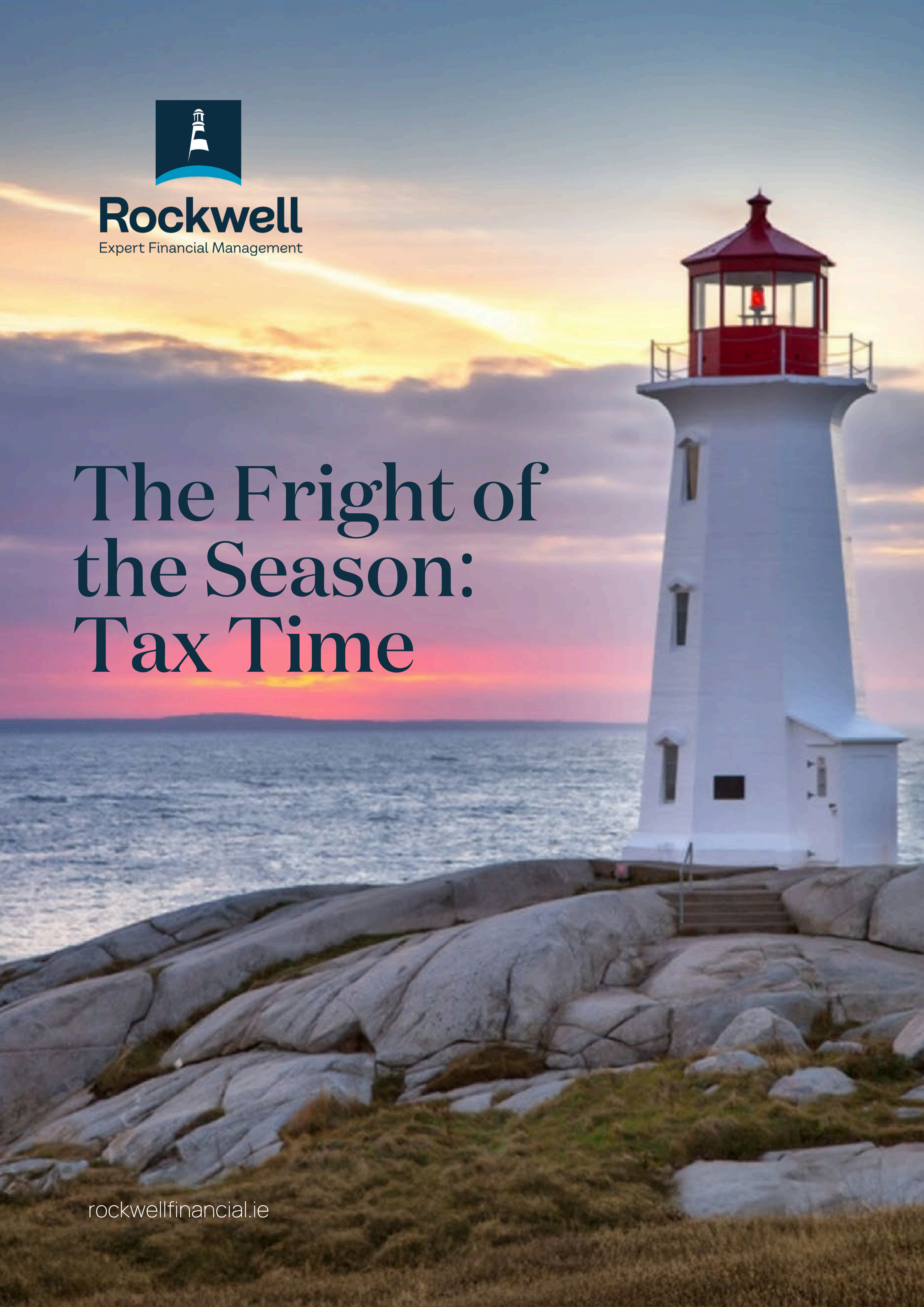

Rockwell
Expert Financial Management

The Fright of the Season: Tax Time

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The Fright of the Season: Tax Time 👻

As Halloween rolls around, we thought we'd dedicate this month's post to one of the most frightening topics for many clients — Tax!
For the self-employed, the next couple of weeks will be spent frantically gathering receipts, invoices, and paperwork to get everything to their accountant before the self-assessment deadline on November 13th. The same applies to anyone with additional income sources, such as rental income.
It's easy to see why this time of year strikes fear into so many — for some, it's the moment they realise they haven't planned properly and now have to find a significant sum in a short period to pay their tax bill.

Can You Still Reduce Your Tax Bill?

Every year around this time, we're asked the same question: "Is there anything I can do now to reduce my tax liability?"
Unfortunately, the answer in most cases remains the same — not really!
It's rarely worth inventing a medical expense just to reclaim 20% in tax relief, nor does it make sense to jump through hoops for minor credits like "uniform expenses."
If you're looking to reduce your 2024 tax liability and it's now November 2025, your only practical option is to make a personal pension contribution and offset it against your bill.
For company directors, it's generally more tax-efficient to have the company make pension contributions on your behalf rather than doing so personally.

A (Slightly) Positive Development

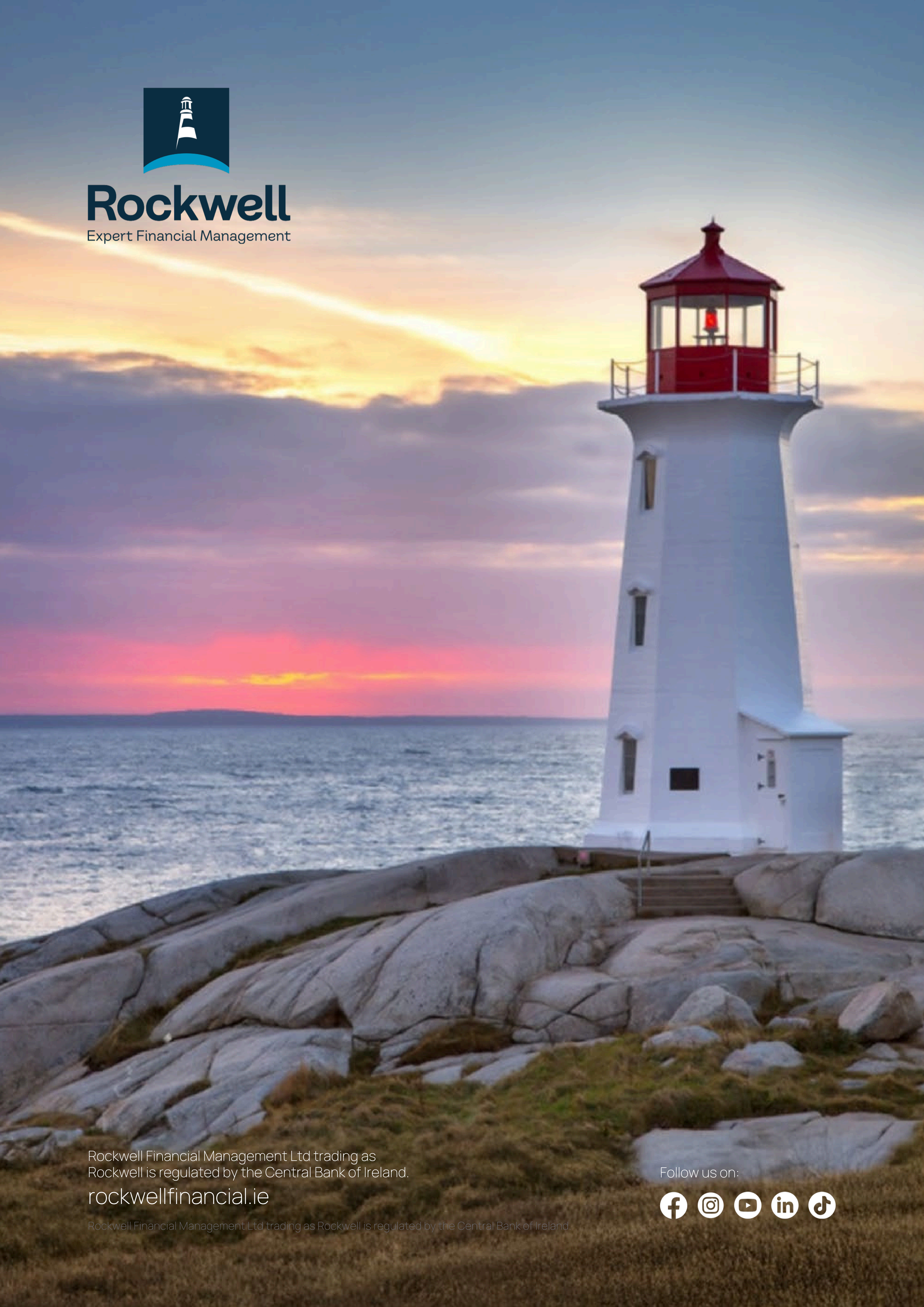
One positive change this year was the government's decision to ease the punitive 41% exit tax on investment fund growth, reducing it to 38%. While welcome, it's still a long way from the 33% Capital Gains Tax rate that many in the industry — including us — have long called for.
There's an undeniable irony in a system where the government takes 38% of the gain and 0% of the risk.
And while we're often told there's no wealth tax in Ireland, the 1% annual levy on life assurance investment funds tells a different story. For every €100,000 invested, the government takes €1,000 up front — plus 38% of any gain — all without sharing any of the downside.
No one expects public protests outside the Dáil calling for lower investment taxes, but it's encouraging that there now seems to be some acceptance at higher levels of government that this regime needs reform.

Show Me the Incentive

Irish households are currently sitting on around €180 billion in deposits, earning interest at roughly one-third of the current inflation rate.
No one's suggesting everyone should rush to invest all their cash, but history shows that incentives drive behaviour. When tax policy encourages long-term investment, people make decisions that enhance both their own financial wellbeing and the economy at large.
The legendary investor Charlie Munger put it perfectly:
"Show me the incentive and I'll show you the behaviour."
It's a pity that, as a nation, we've largely missed out on the massive growth in global markets over the last decade — especially compared with our counterparts in the U.S. The gap in household wealth is striking.
There are plenty of reasons people hesitate to invest, but frustration with tax rates shouldn't be one of them.
And while leaving money on deposit might feel safe, earning less than inflation means your purchasing power is quietly eroding.

Final Thoughts

Tax may be frightening, but ignoring it is far scarier. With the right planning and advice, you can turn tax season from a source of stress into an opportunity to build long-term wealth.
At Rockwell, we help clients plan proactively — not reactively — so that tax time doesn't come as a shock. If you'd like to explore how strategic financial planning can help reduce your future tax bills, we'd love to chat.



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