ISSUED 31 July 2025

PROVIDER SECTOR
Just

FINANCIAL STRENGTH ASSESSMENT

Analysis by AKG Financial Analytics Ltd
Accessible • Comparative • Independent

ABOUT THIS FINANCIAL STRENGTH ASSESSMENT

This AKG report and the analysis and ratings contained within it provide assessment of financial strength and associated considerations. Financial Strength is focused on the ability of a company to deliver ongoing operational capability in the interest of its customers and in line with their fairly held expectations. AKG's perspective in the assessment of financial strength is wholly that of a customer of a product or service. From that foundation, this analysis is specifically designed to inform financial advisers and assist in their required understanding of a company's operational financial strength.

Given the underlying customer perspective, the financial strength of companies needs to be focused at an operational level (i.e. the elements and functions of an organisation which operate to specifically deliver and manage a proposition or service to the customer), specifically on the company that is effecting the product or service that a customer is selecting. This is important, because from the customer's perspective it is that company that needs to survive in a form that maintains the requisite operational characteristics to meet their fairly held requirements. And it is thus at this level that the selection needs of the customers' advisers must be met. This contrasts to credit rating, which will be undertaken at group or parent company level where investment or debt placement etc. is made.

Further details on how analysis is undertaken is provided at the end of this report and may also be obtained from AKG.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Rating & Assessment Commentary

RATINGS

Overall Financial Strength

AKG B+
FINANCIAL STRENGTH RATED
PROVIDER SECTOR VERY STRONG
JUST RETIREMENT LTD

AKG B+
FINANCIAL STRENGTH RATED
PROVIDER SECTOR VERY STRONG
PARTNERSHIP LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY LTD

Additional Financial Strength and Supporting Ratings

	Non Profit Financial Strength	Unit Linked Financial Strength	With Profits Financial Strength	Service	Image & Strategy	Business Performance
Just Retirement Ltd	★★★★	★★★★	▣	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★
Partnership Life Assurance Company Ltd	★★★★	▣	▣	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★

SUMMARY

- Just Group plc ('Just', 'The group') specialises in segments of the UK retirement income market
- The group was formed following the merger of Just Retirement Group plc and Partnership Assurance Group plc
- The recent key focus has been capital self-sufficiency, resilience, and providing optionality to deploy surplus capital. Having delivered on this focus, the capital position of the group was maintained with a Solvency II capital coverage ratio of 204% [2023: 197%]; and it has also hit its other consequential targets as planned or ahead of plan, putting it in a position to now leverage this established position for further investment in support of further growth
- Just remains highly regarded for service in the intermediary market, where the group has over 700,000 customers
- Product innovation continues, illustrated by the recent development of the Secure Lifetime Income platform proposition and Destination Retirement (an automated advice tool for those with modest savings)
- Further product innovation in the Defined Benefit De-risking Solutions (DB) segment through continued investment in the Bulk Quotation service ("Beacon") and DB partner proposition (funded reinsurance) which continues to grow
- The group looks well placed to capitalise on the resurgence of demand for annuities, as well as the positive funding levels in the DB pensions environment, further opening up the buyout market potential
- Just Retirement Ltd (JRL) is the group's main life insurance company both in terms of size and new business written
- Partnership Life Assurance Company Ltd's (PLACL) principal activities are the run-off of life assurance and annuities and the writing of new UK Care business
- At 31 December 2024, JRL's and PLACL's SCR coverage ratios were 178% and 183% respectively [2023: 191% and 174%]
- Just and its component businesses have always sought alignment with the regulatory direction of travel in terms of its purpose and opportunity. This together with a relative lack of significant legacy elements, should position it well under the thrust of Consumer Duty and Vulnerability initiatives and in particular, in terms of the latter, where Just has sought to take a lead
- On 31 July 2025, it was announced that the boards of Brookfield Wealth Solutions Ltd and Just had reached agreement on the terms of a recommended cash offer to acquire the entire issued and to be issued share capital of Just

COMMENTARY

Financial Strength Ratings

In July 2024, the group received approval to expand the scope of its revised internal model, and applied it to include the Partnership business from 30 September 2024, which previously had its capital requirement calculated using Standard Formula. This allowed more refined calibration of risks and recognition of diversification with JRL, contributing to the group's improved capital efficiency. This one-off effect accounted for 6% of the increase in the capital coverage ratio.

At 31 December 2024, the capital position of the group was maintained with a proforma Solvency II capital coverage ratio of 204% [2023: 197%] based on £1,561m [2023: £1,527m] of Excess Own Funds, as the business benefited from management actions and rising interest rates.

During 2024, the group tendered for and cancelled £250m 7% Tier 2 external debt due in 2031 (callable 2025) and raised £400m 6.875% Tier 2 subordinated debt due in 2035.

Just can point to demonstrable progress with regard its focus on its capital position, putting it in a strong position to selectively grow its business and create value for shareholders. The group was also able to recommence the payment of dividends, with £16m paid in 2022, £19m in 2023, and £23m in 2024.

The group plans to continue to strengthen its capital position, in order to support the new business franchise over the next five years, through organic capital generation and has continued to de-risk its balance sheet. As such it should be well positioned to take advantage of the strong fundamental drivers for growth in its core markets. In 2024, capital strain totalled £71m or 1.3% of gross premiums, remaining well below the internal threshold of 2.5%.

Group liquidity resources include a £400m undrawn revolving credit facility, supporting group-level flexibility. The borrowing facility is subject to financial covenants that are measured biannually as at the end of June and December, being the ratio of consolidated net debt to the sum of net assets and consolidated net debt not being greater than 45%. The ratio on 31 December 2024 was 19% [2023: 24%].

Just Retirement Ltd

JRL is the group's primary insurance entity, responsible for all new business in DB de-risking, retail annuities, and lifetime mortgages, forming the engine of capital deployment and growth. It has looked to build its capital base in recent years in response to regulatory developments.

The business is now capital self-sufficient, underpinned by growth in underlying organic capital generation.

At 31 December 2024, JRL had excess assets over liabilities of £1,813m [2023: £1,857m]. Excess Own Funds and the SCR coverage ratio were £1,010m [2023: £1,102m] and 178% [2023: 191%]. The reduction in SCR coverage ratio was driven by a combination of new business strain, amortisation of Transitional Measures on Technical Provisions (TMTP), and adverse market movements.

On first call, JRL redeemed £250m 9.375% perpetual restricted Tier 1 loan notes to Just Group plc, which was replaced with £250m 9.75% restricted Tier 1 new loan notes advanced to JRL by Just Group plc on 26 April 2024 with no fixed maturity date.

On 5 February 2025, JRL repaid the outstanding £50m notional associated with its Tier 3 subordinated debt from Just Group plc.

JRL did not pay dividends in 2024 [2023: nil], with earnings retained to support solvency and reinvestment.

Partnership Life Assurance Company Ltd

PLACL operates in run-off except for new long-term care annuities, providing diversification, legacy asset management, and capital optimisation benefits via the internal model.

PLACL's SCR coverage ratio had reduced in recent years, although there was an increase in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

PLACL's capital coverage ratio, including a recalculation of TMTP, was 183% at 31 December 2024 compared with a ratio of 174% at 31 December 2023, benefiting from reduced SCR following internal model adoption and business run-off effects.

PLACL did not pay dividends in 2024 [2023: nil], although following the move to an internal model, the business did transfer capital to a securitisation vehicle (PLACL Re 1 Ltd), indicating alternative capital management mechanisms are in use.

During 2024, the company obtained approval for moving to an Internal Model basis to calculate its Solvency II capital requirements.

PLACL redeemed £50m 9.375% perpetual restricted Tier 1 loan notes to Just Group plc. These notes were first callable by PLACL in April 2024.

Whilst it is not the primary life company in the group, PLACL is still considered an important component part.

Service Rating

Just stresses a customer focused, service orientated philosophy within its business and has for some time and continues to receive strong recognition for its service. At the heart of the service credentials is an integrated approach to continuous improvement in customer experience. This includes:

- The active use of the Temkin model of Customer Experience to develop all aspects of processing and communicating to ensure the three dimensions of outcome, effort and emotion are considered
- An extensive programme of training and coaching on Customer Centric Call Taking to develop mastery skills for telephone support staff
- A network of Customer Champions who specialise in areas of customer vulnerability such as dementia, physical impairment and mental emotional distress with a view to educating staff and adapting processes to accommodate these customer needs
- A refreshed and improved Bereavement Service, with enhanced staff training and dedicated champion
- A balanced scorecard which accentuates customer outcomes and staff development over historic operational performance measures

The business also places an emphasis on plain English to support better understanding of its offering by customers and thus benefit the ease of service excellence.

Protecting the welfare of its colleagues and ensuring the delivery of critical services to customers were clear priorities driving Just's response to the pandemic, with the needs of its customers at the forefront when setting its goals.

Many of its customers are in vulnerable groups and Just was able to maintain the delivery of all its services to customers during the disruption. In addition, Just made a number of changes to its products and services to help support its customers through a difficult period, including introducing procedures to help people with the constrained conveyancing and advice process, reducing interest rates on LTM in certain circumstances and implementing a temporary capital guarantee feature for long-term care products in the first year of the policy.

A customer orientated approach has benefitted the business, as significant changes to customer service or the propositions offered before the introduction of Consumer Duty were not required.

Image & Strategy Rating

Just has the following strategic aims:

- Grow sustainably
- Scale with technology
- Reach new customers
- Be recommended by its customers
- Be proud to work at Just

Just's longer term ambitions look to be achievable now it has reached its desired capital position and if it remains in a position where it is consistently capital generative. The Just brand is able to demonstrate a clear and established retirement solutions market position.

The operational strategy remains focused firmly on the 'at' and 'in-retirement' market where Just seeks to leverage its experience, specific expertise and intellectual property. An example of diversified growth has been the establishment and maturity of the buy-out/buy-in proposition. This side of the business has become increasingly important and has grown significantly in terms of its scale and contribution in a relatively short space of time. Ongoing development of this business line includes increased participation in the £100m-£1bn transaction size segment. DB partner (funded reinsurance) provides optionality for Just to leverage its expertise to participate more widely, including for large £1bn+ transaction where it is actively quoting. DB partner generates an upfront fee income, rather than deploying capital, should it choose.

Just has a strong social purpose: helping people achieve a better later life. 2020 saw Just further strengthen its sustainability credentials, becoming the first UK insurer to issue a Green Bond and the first to provide a green lifetime mortgage. The Green Bond enshrines Just's commitment to supporting the transition to a low-carbon global economy as all the proceeds are earmarked to be invested in green buildings, renewable energy and clean transportation.

Just became the first UK and European insurer to issue a Sustainability Restricted Tier 1 bond in 2021. The group has provided a commitment to invest the gross issuance proceeds of £325m in eligible green and social assets. When combined with the 2020 Green Bond commitment, the group has already completed its commitment to allocating a minimum of £575m towards these eligible assets at the end of 2022, ahead of a September 2024 target. In September 2024, Just issued a new £400m Sustainability Tier 2 bond, where it has committed to investing the same amount by September 2024 in eligible green and social assets in accordance with its Sustainable Bond Framework.

Just is aiming for its operations to be carbon net zero in terms of emissions by 2025.

Business Performance Rating

In 2024, the group's underlying operating profit, increased by 34% to £504m, driven by strong new business performance, further augmented by robust growth in recurring in-force profit.

Investment and economic profits were £18m, and, combined with a number of smaller non-operating items, led to an adjusted profit before tax of £482m for 2024 [2023: £520m]. After allowing for the deferral of profit into the Contractual Service Margin (CSM) balance sheet reserve, the statutory profit before tax was £113m [2023: £172m].

Shareholder funded Retirement Income sales increased by 36% to £5,308m [2023 £3,893m] with strong demand for its products enabling Just to write high volumes of new business at an efficient capital strain positive effect on both the Defined Benefit (DB) and the retail Guaranteed Income for Life (GIfL) markets. These were broken down as follows:

- DB sales were £4,275m [2023: £2,999m], an increase of 43%
- GIfL sales were £1,033m [2023: £894m], an increase of 16%

Despite record sales, new business capital strain was well managed. In 2024, strain totalled £71m, or 1.3% of gross premiums — significantly below the Group's internal threshold of 2.5% — reflecting effective use of reinsurance and pricing discipline.

DB partner (funded reinsurance) increased by 165% to £1,101m [2023: £416m]. The £1.8bn G4S transaction executed in 2024 was partially reinsured via DB Partner, using a mix of 60% quota share funded reinsurance and 35% longevity swap. These arrangements helped mitigate capital strain.

On an underlying operating profit basis, Just reported a 34% increase to £504m at 31 December 2024 [2023: £377m].

JRL reported an underlying operating profit of £492m [2023: £362m] and IFRS profit before tax of £102m in 2024 [2023: £170m]. The lower profit before tax was due to lower positive investment and economics variances of £10m [2023: £99m] primarily due to lower asset trading and other variances, and a smaller decrease in credit spreads in 2024 compared with 2023.

For PLACL, there was an IFRS profit before tax of £38m in 2024 [2023: £32m]. The year on year change reflected an increase in the investment return on surplus assets, an increase in investment and economic profit to £9m [2023: £6m], and a reduction in finance costs to £18m [2023: £20m], following repayment of £50m of Tier 1 debt in April 2024.

Group & Parental Context

BACKGROUND

Just Group plc is a UK-based, FTSE-listed financial services company specialising in retirement income solutions. It was formed in 2016 through the merger of Just Retirement and Partnership Assurance, and now serves over 700,000 customers with a workforce of around 1,300 employees.

The group's operations are concentrated in the UK, with a small annuity business in South Africa. Its principal subsidiaries include:

- JRL – the main life company, writing all new annuity, DB de-risking and lifetime mortgage business
- PLACL – manages legacy annuity business and Care Plan sales
- Hub Financial Solutions Ltd (HFSL) – provides advice and distribution solutions across B2B and B2C channels
- Just Retirement Money Ltd (JRML) – conducts all lifetime mortgage lending
- Just Retirement Management Services Ltd – provides operational support and shared services

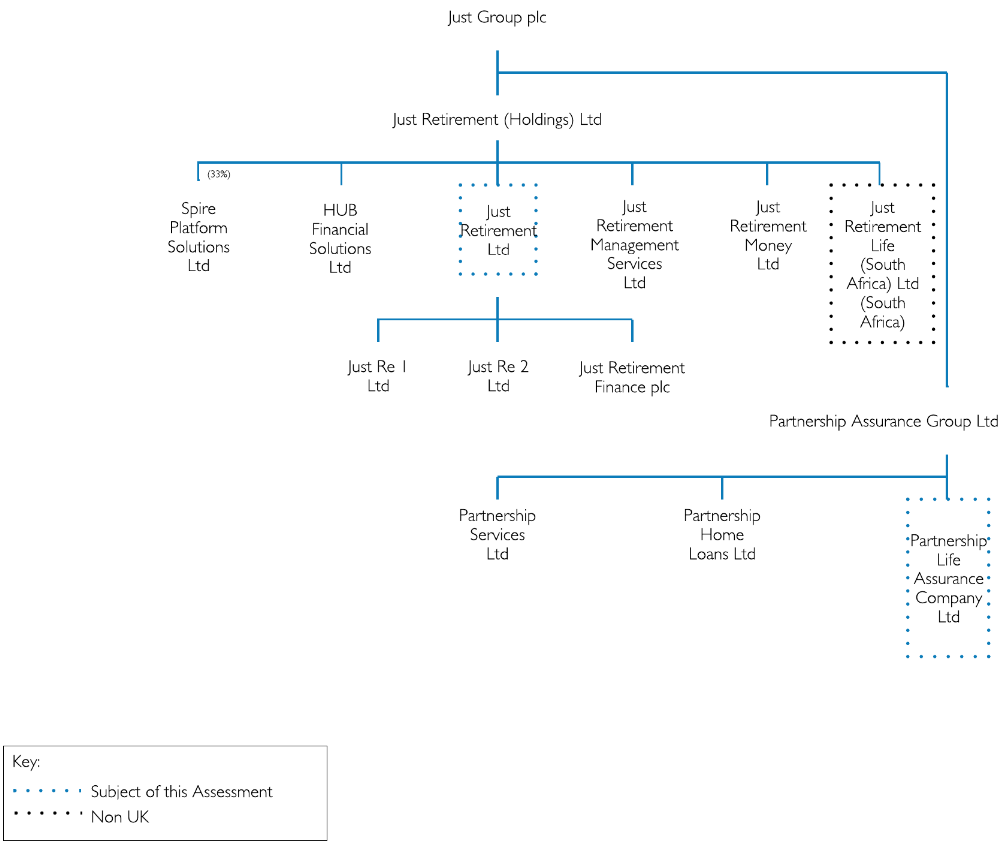
Recent strategic developments include expansion into platform-based guaranteed income (via Secure Lifetime Income), the growth of the DB Partner funded reinsurance model, and investments in digital advice tools such as Destination Retirement. The Group aims for capital self-sufficiency, enhanced customer outcomes, and to maintain leadership in the retirement income sector.

On 31 July 2025, it was announced that the boards of Brookfield Wealth Solutions Ltd (BWS) and Just had reached agreement on the terms of a recommended cash offer to acquire the entire issued and to be issued share capital of Just. The Just Directors considered the terms of the acquisition to be fair and reasonable, and have recommend to Scheme Shareholders to vote in favour at the upcoming General Meeting. On the basis of the required percentage (75%) of Scheme Shareholders voting in favour, the acquisition is expected to be effected by means of a Court-sanctioned scheme of arrangement between Just and Scheme Shareholders under Part 26 of the Companies Act, with completion during the first half of 2026.

BWS was spun off from Brookfield Corporation in 2021 and today owns and operates a leading wealth solutions business focused on securing the financial futures of individuals and institutions through a range of retirement services, wealth protection products and tailored capital solutions. As at 30 June 2025, BWS has invested over US$12bn (£9bn) of balance sheet capital into its insurance business and has over US$140bn (£105bn) of total assets.

While BWS currently operates primarily in North America, it has been strategically focused on the UK market, and recently announced the launch of its UK insurance operations through its wholly owned subsidiary, Blumont Annuity Company UK Ltd (Blumont). BWS intends for Blumont and Just to operate as a single, consolidated insurance group under the Just brand.

GROUP STRUCTURE (SIMPLIFIED)



Company Analysis: Just Retirement Ltd

BASIC INFORMATION

Company Type
Life Insurer

Ownership & Control
Just Group plc, whose significant shareholders at 6 March 2025 with more than 5% of capital included: Fidelity International (5.51%), Blackrock, Inc. (5.34%), JPMorgan Asset Management Holdings Inc. (5.11%) and Schroders plc (5.02%).

Year Established
2004

Country of Registration
UK

Head Office
Enterprise House, Bancroft Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 7RP

Contact
www.justadviser.com/contact-us/

Key Personnel

Role	Name
Group Chair	J P Hastings-Bass
Group Chief Executive Officer	D L Richardson
Group Chief Financial Officer	M W Godson
Group Marketing and Distribution Director	D P Cooper
Group Chief People Officer	E C Evans
Group Chief Risk Officer	A Duncan
Group Capital Management and Investment Executive	P Fulcher
MD, Defined Benefit Solutions and Interim Chief Digital Information Officer	P J Sagoo
MD, Retail	T Evans
Group Chief Actuary	P M Jolly
Chair JRL and PLACL	J T Perks

Company Background
JRL was established in 2004 with a capitalisation of £25m from Langholm Capital. Around 20% of the group was floated on AIM in December 2006, raising an additional £56m. November 2009 saw the group acquired by Avalon Acquisitions Ltd, a company established by private equity advisers Permira and now renamed as Just Retirement Group Holdings Ltd. Admitted to the London Stock Exchange in November 2013, April 2016 saw Just Retirement merge with Partnership and the formation of Just Group plc (formerly JRP Group plc).

JRL is the group's main life insurance company, generating 98% of the group's shareholder backed new business premiums.

OPERATIONS

Governance System and Structure

Just Group's system of governance is applied across all UK regulated subsidiaries of the group, including the insurance regulated entities JRL and PLACL. The Just Group plc Board aspires to high standards of corporate governance, and focuses primarily on strategic, policy and governance issues, acting in accordance with the best interests of policyholders and shareholders as a whole.

The group Board has delegated responsibilities for oversight of specific activities of the group and its subsidiary undertakings to its Board Committees. The Boards of JRL and PLACL delegate specific matters to their own separate Audit Committees and Investment Committees. To ensure independence from the group Board, the Chair of the JRL and PLACL Boards is not a Director of Just Group plc.

The aim is then to have governance embedded via the established three lines of defence model. The first line of defence is line management who devise and operate the internal controls over the business. The second line functions are Risk Management, Compliance and Actuarial Assurance, which oversee the first line, ensure that the system of controls is sufficient and is operated appropriately, and also measure and report on risk to the Group Risk and Compliance Committee. The third line is Group Internal Audit who provide independent assurance to the Board and its Committees that the first and second lines are operating appropriately.

The group states a commitment to improving its gender diversity and that it achieved its own internal target that 33% of senior leadership roles should be held by women by December 2023. At the end of December 2024, this number was at 39%.

Just has developed a Sustainable Investment Framework (SIF), to formally integrate ESG considerations into its investment portfolio and decision-making process. During 2023 and 2024, the group had cumulatively invested £640m in ESG type assets, including social housing, renewable energy industry and NHS facilities out of a three year £825m target by December 2025. At 31 December 2024, Just reported a 90% reduction in its carbon footprint since 2019.

Just Group has formally adopted a carbon emissions reduction target, and is aiming to achieve net zero from its operations by 2025. Furthermore, the group is targeting a reduction to net zero in its investments/supply chain by 2050, with a 50% reduction milestone by 2030, in line with the ABI climate change roadmap, published in July 2021.

Risk Management

The group's risk management framework is based on an enterprise-wide approach in which all the risks are considered along with their inter-relationships and risk management is embedded in all activities within the group. The risk management processes are integrated into the group's organisational structure and decision-making processes. Integration is assisted by, in particular, the group's internal control system as set out in the Group Internal Control policy.

The group's Own Risk and Solvency Assessment (ORSA) embeds comprehensive risk reviews into the group management processes. The annual ORSA report is a key part of the business cycle and informs strategic decision making. ORSA updates are prepared each quarter to keep the Board appraised of the group's evolving risk profile.

Risk identification is performed continuously, including its ORSA process. The primary risks to which Just is exposed arise through its regulated insurance entities JRL and PLACL and the risks did not change in 2024.

The key risks are:

- Underwriting
- Market
- Credit
- Liquidity
- Conduct & Operational risk
- Strategic risk including risk of Regulatory Change

Just has developed a strong and central risk management approach, with significant evolution having taken place in recent years and continual development in line with the business needs. The risk management framework seeks to align overall business strategy with financial and non-financial risk exposures, capital allocation and sustainable growth. Central to this has been work to engage all employees in making more effective decisions which incorporate a better understanding of risk.

The group now operates a full internal model for JRL, PLACL and group. Just received approval to extend the use of the internal model to PLACL in 2024. The internal model includes all quantifiable risks to which the group and its regulated insurance entities are materially exposed. The material risks in the internal model comprise Market risks, Underwriting and Operational risks.

Administration
Since the launch of both constituent businesses, management philosophy has been that the quality of service to the intermediary is a key driver to long-term success, along with an ability to deliver such in a cost effective and consistent manner; with both operations having constructed appropriate infrastructure to do this and consequently developing positive reputations in this area.

The ongoing Just strategy is to utilise the benefits of technology to improve the quality of its service and proposition and establish a much more digitally based operation whilst also controlling costs. Overall the company regards service quality and customisation to be key factors for selection in each of its chosen markets. All areas of operations have published and measured service standards.

The delivery of a significant technology upgrade across the group in 2020 was seen as a critical enabler to Just's ability to respond to pandemic impacts. There is a continued commitment to improve processes in order to become more efficient and productive.

Benchmarks
Both Just Retirement and Partnership have gathered a wealth of service awards and standards over many years. Including Financial Adviser 5-Star Service Awards for both businesses over many consecutive years leading up to the merger and since, and other awards such as Moneyfacts for annuity service. Now operating as Just, the group has continued to win awards including:

- 'Winner - Pension and Protection' and 'Winner - Mortgage Providers' at the 2024 Financial Adviser Service Awards
- 'Best Provider for Adviser Support, Training & Development' at the 2023 Equity Release Awards
- 20th consecutive '5-star' accolade in the 'Pensions & Protection Providers' category and 15th consecutive '5-star' in the 'Mortgage Providers' category at the 2024 Financial Adviser Service Awards
- 'Outstanding Achievement Award' at the 2023 Financial Adviser Service Awards
- 'Risk Management Provider of the Year' at the 2022 Pensions Age Awards
- 'Best Annuity Service' at the 2021 Investment Life & Pensions Moneyfacts Awards, for the fourth time

Outsourcing
The principal activities that are outsourced are:

- Investment Management - (relevant primarily for illiquid assets) – Just has adopted a hybrid investment management approach, whereby certain activities for origination and management of invested assets are outsourced to third party asset managers across various jurisdictions worldwide. This applies to both JRL and PLACL. There are currently 13 investment managers: 8 in the UK, two in the Netherlands, one in Switzerland and another based in the US. A further investment manager is based in the UK and has its headquarters in Australia
- Defined benefit (buy out/buy in) policy administration - outsourced to Aptia
- Administration of Post Completion policies - outsourced by PLACL to Capita Hartshead (annuities) and Direct Group Ltd (life protection)
- IT data centre services

Also in South Africa, annuity administration, investment management and most underwriting is outsourced to a range of local third parties.

STRATEGY

Market Positioning

Just is a specialist UK financial services group focusing on certain segments of the UK retirement income market and considers itself to be a disrupter on behalf of its customers, aiming to do this through innovation.

Its purpose is to 'help people achieve a better later life', and in respect of which, if it is successfully able to demonstrate delivery, should help position the brand positively in terms of key differentiation in coming years.

The group, which moved to operate under the single Just brand in January 2017, has the following areas of strategic focus:

- UK Retail (retirement income, lifetime mortgages and long-term care)
- UK Defined Benefit De-risking
- International (South Africa retirement income, launched in 2015 and now with around 60 FTEs)
- HUB business (offering regulated financial advice and guidance services for individuals and a range of business services tailored to corporate clients)

Distribution

Just has a specialist but increasingly balanced distribution strategy. This sees a balance between the DB solutions arena, which draws on the recent strengths and growth of both businesses, and the strong specialist position of each in the retail space.

Within this overall balance there is then further balance sought within the retail space. Here the primary focus of the merged business remains on the intermediary market, although the company continues to seek to widen and re-balance its distribution through the development of other complementary channels and opportunities overseas. Alongside the 'mainstream' intermediary channel, other distribution partnerships include relationships with other life companies, such as Phoenix Life, Prudential and Zurich, aggregators and media organisations. Further, Just is able to provide a range of options and components for the B2B2C market, including white labelling and outsourcing of advice, software and database support.

In July 2017, the business of The Open Market Annuity Service Ltd (TOMAS) was transferred to Just Retirement Solutions Ltd, a sister company. Just Retirement Solutions Ltd was then renamed as HUB Financial Solutions Ltd. HUB Financial Solutions is seen as a prime enabler, including with corporate pension schemes to enable simplified advice to members and offers Retirement Income Services and Equity Release Advice Services for a number of different audiences, as well as software and consultancy services that are provided to businesses and their employees.

In 2019, the Secure Lifetime Income (SLI) platform proposition was launched in partnership with Spire Platform Solutions. At launch, the SLI solution was made available via the Wealthtime Platform. SLI is being extended to other platforms with 7IM added in May 2022, enabling a widening number of financial advisers to blend guaranteed income alongside their drawdown investment portfolios.

In 2024, a strategic partnership with Invesco was launched to provide the Invesco's MPS and the SLI within one retirement solution aimed at providing greater flexibility for advisers when it comes to meeting differing risks to income. This provides advised clients with an option to have the guaranteed income of a secured lifetime product whilst getting the potential growth benefits of a model portfolio, with the flexibility to reinvest the income they do not immediately need.

In its retail markets Just has introduced Destination Retirement (via HUB Financial Solutions) an automated advice service which has been developed to help close the financial advice gap for people in middle Britain with more modest pension savings. There has been significant investment in HUB for Destination Retirement as key strategic development, albeit one which has created losses within that subsidiary and the requirement for ongoing support.

Just continues to invest for growth by developing new solutions which are aimed at positively disrupting its market and to deliver better outcomes for customers. 2020 saw the company complete a pilot transaction to advance the DB partnering model, which is to originate DB de-risking transactions on behalf of a partner, utilising the partner's available capital. This proposition is targeted at the above £250m transaction size segment and is therefore complementary to Just's core DB business. Just's largest DB transaction to date was signed in February 2023 a £0.5bn Buy-in insuring c4,800 members. Around 50% of the liabilities are reinsured with a DB partner. In December 2023, Just signed its third DB partner transaction, this time for £416m, with 100% of the liabilities reinsured. In November 2024, Just signed its fourth, and largest to date, DB partner transaction, for £1.1bn, with 60% of the liabilities of a £1.8bn transaction reinsured in return for an origination fee.

In the DB de-risking market for deals of less than £100 million, Just is the market leader, with its success driven by its proprietary price monitoring service. It has a competitive advantage due to its consistent presence, speed, certainty of execution and reputation. The group also derives a significant amount of repeat business from its existing clients, which is a strong validation of the pensioner, trustee and sponsor onboarding and service experience. In 2024, Just wrote 129 DB transactions, its highest number of transactions. Since 2020, Just has steadily extended its participation in the medium sized £100 million to £1 billion transaction size segment, and is now actively quoting on transaction sizes over £1bn. Just's market share in its core less than £1bn transaction size segment has doubled over the past 4 years to 16%.

Just expects residential lifetime mortgages to continue to provide an important, but reducing, component of the investment portfolio it uses to back its Retirement Income liabilities especially during the current high interest rate period.

Proposition

Just is a leading specialist provider of retirement income products and services to both individuals and corporates. With its strategy firmly focused on the approaching and at-and-in-retirement impaired and enhanced life market, Just has four core products with JRL focusing on providing retirement income products to individual and corporate clients and lifetime mortgages and PLACL on care products. In addition, HUB Financial Solutions offers a drawdown proposition, which is administered on the Embark platform following the transfer of that business in 2019.

JRL is the group's principal life company writing all new business in respect of annuities and DB de-risking contracts and the vast majority of residential lifetime mortgage business.

The following are written into JRL:

- DB
- GIfL
- SLI
- LTM

Written by PLACL:

- Care Plans (CP)

Just benefits from its positioning in attractive segments of the UK retirement income markets, which combined with an established track record and highly developed intellectual property, enable it to continue serving its customers, while also building shareholder value through profitable and sustainable growth.

Consideration of the role of platforms and other key tech and tool elements along the advice value chain is also central in further product development. In its retail markets Just introduced Destination Retirement, an automated advice service which has been developed to help close the financial advice gap for people in middle Britain with more modest pension savings.

Just has taken steps to make its specialist retirement components increasingly accessible via current adviser technology and practices. In May 2022, 7IM became the second platform to incorporate Just's Secure Lifetime Income proposition and further platforms are anticipated. This proposition has been specifically designed for SIPPs held on platform to provide an element of guaranteed income alongside a customer's chosen investment strategies. This opportunity in this regard, and the scope for and likelihood of further product innovation, would appear to be significant for both the company and the wider market with its SLI currently additionally offered by 10 DFMs, another area of distribution.

Recent links established with Invesco and Openwork are illustrative of the momentum being established. These come under this refreshed approach of more comprehensive linkage to elements within the adviser ecosystem, with the aim of embedding SLI as a common further retirement advice component.

The use of technological solutions is seen as a key part of enabling the development of the market and its own growth. As well as its own web presence, Just continues to develop links with portal services and is keen to meet the requirements of its distributors as they evolve. Within the DB proposition, Just continues to see take-up of a bulk quotation service (known as "Beacon"), which provides early visibility of insurer pricing. Its speed of execution is seen as a critical advantage, where deals can be completed in several weeks. In 2024, the number of schemes using Beacon was over 350. 19 EBCs now utilise the service, as they and trustees increasingly benefit from price monitoring.

Just continues to invest for growth by developing new solutions in order to positively disrupt its markets and deliver better outcomes for customers. Just's proposition in the DB buyout sector remains an important part of its offering and one that has been key to the business's success in recent years. Just has developed a capital light product known as DB partnering for de-risking transactions which exceed £250m in size. Here, Just has the optionality to retain a larger transaction on its own balance sheet or to substantially reinsure all of the risks on all or part of the transaction, while earning a success based origination fee which can offset the capital requirement for the portion of the transaction that Just chooses to keep for itself. One DB partner transaction was executed in 2024, relating to Just's largest transaction to date, the £1.8bn full Buy-In from G4S. This was reinsured using both quota share (funded) reinsurance and longevity swap reinsurance at respectively 60% and 35% of the total risk. Funded reinsurance represented 17% of the total new business volume in 2024.

The Care Market has particular growth potential, but from a very low base and one which remains hampered by its dependency on long outstanding developments at government/legislative level. However, given broader change in this area and with other, including larger providers, looking at participation, it remains an opportunity.

Lifetime mortgages complement the annuity business, with a controlled proportion of annuity proceeds invested in them. Lifetime mortgages are an investment of annuity funds on more favourable terms than normally available through corporate bonds, the more conventional investment medium for annuities. Whilst potentially providing a higher return, this diversifies the investment portfolio and is therefore beneficial from a Solvency II perspective, albeit the regulatory backdrop raises potentially negative issues here. In addition, the duration characteristics of Lifetime Mortgages are beneficial in matching annuity liabilities, particularly Defined Benefits, which tend to be of longer duration. A small proportion of the funds are invested in index-linked gilts to match indexed annuities.

Following the publication of PS 13/18, Just chose to be more selective in the lifetime mortgage market, with a focus on shorter duration loans to older borrowers, lower LTV business and customers with sufficient income to service interest on their borrowings.

The 'Just for You' mortgage range was launched in January 2019. The product includes standard features, then the customer decides with their advisor which additional options and flexibility suits their individual needs, and includes an interest serviced offering as part of the proposition.

In July 2020, Just launched the UK's first green lifetime mortgage as part of its latest product update. The green lifetime mortgage offers a small discount on their interest rate for new lifetime mortgage customers whose property has an A or B-rated Energy Performance Certificate.

KEY COMPANY FINANCIAL DATA

Last 3 reporting periods up to 31 December 2024

Assets

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Fixed interest	9,428	14,320	17,627
Equities	0	0	0
Collectives	904	1,026	1,380
Property	0	0	0
Linked	0	0	0
Derivatives	2,153	2,253	2,630
Loans and mortgages	6,084	7,224	7,306
Reinsurance recoverables	30	283	1,442
Cash	348	401	682
Other	1,618	942	1,231
Total Assets	20,564	26,449	32,297

Liabilities

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Technical provisions - non-life	0	0	0
Technical provisions - life	14,565	18,432	22,234
Other	4,461	6,160	8,250
Total Liabilities	19,026	24,592	30,484
Excess of assets over liabilities	1,538	1,857	1,813

JRL's total assets increased by 22% and liabilities by 24% in 2024. The excess of assets over liabilities decreased by 2%.

JRL's main asset classes are fixed interest (55%) and lifetime mortgages (shown above as loans & mortgages - 23%), both reflecting the nature of the liabilities.

At 31 December 2024, on a Solvency II basis, the Just Group had total assets of £36.5bn [2023: £30.9bn] and the excess of assets over liabilities amounted to £2.4bn [2023: £2.5bn]. JRL and PLACL had excess assets of £1,813m and £374m respectively [2023: £1,857m and £425m respectively].

Life Technical Provisions

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Insurance with profit participation	0	0	0
Index-linked and unit-linked insurance	0	0	0
Life annuities	14,565	18,432	22,234
Non-life annuities	0	0	0
Other life insurance	0	0	0
Health insurance	0	0	0
Total life and health technical provisions	14,565	18,432	22,234

Life Expenses

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Insurance with profit participation	0	0	0
Index-linked and unit-linked insurance	0	0	0
Life annuities	107	224	233
Non-life annuities	0	0	0
Other life insurance	0	0	0
Health insurance	0	0	0
Other expenses	92	38	0
Total life and health expenses	199	261	233

JRL has one line of business under Solvency II: 'Life annuities', in which all of its principal products are reported.

Solvency Capital Requirement (SCR)

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Market risk	1,183	1,388	1,398
Counterparty default risk	15	15	20
Life underwriting risk	470	573	601
Health underwriting risk	0	0	0
Non-life underwriting risk	0	0	0
Diversification	(473)	(548)	(542)
Intangible asset risk	0	0	0
Operational risk	154	154	193
Capital add-ons already set	0	0	0
Other items	(337)	(367)	(383)
Solvency capital requirement	1,012	1,214	1,287

Eligible Own Funds

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Tier 1 unrestricted	1,223	1,607	1,563
Tier 1 restricted	250	250	250
Tier 2	406	411	434
Tier 3	100	49	51
Eligible own funds to meet SCR	1,978	2,316	2,297
Excess of own funds over SCR	967	1,102	1,010
SCR coverage ratio (%)	196.0	191.0	178.4

JRL calculates its Solvency II capital requirements using a full internal model. Following PRA approval for the use of Internal Model for PLACL in July 2024, the Just Group SCR is now fully calculated using the Internal Model, with other non-life components consolidated using Method 1-Consolidation.

JRL has looked to build its capital base in recent years in response to regulatory developments.

JRL's SCR coverage ratio decreased to 178% at 31 December 2024 [2023: 191%], with the increase in SCR mainly due to new business written partially offset by market movements over the period.

JRL has approval to apply the matching adjustment and TMTP in its calculation of technical provisions. TMTP was recalculated at 31 December 2024 as part of the regular two-yearly mandatory regulations. The 31 December 2024 regulatory position reflects this recalculation, with TMTP of £263m [2023: £325m].

Recent regulatory changes relating to the Solvency UK reforms have resulted in matching adjustment attestation, removal of the sub-investment grade cliff in the matching adjustment, and the reflection of rating notches in the fundamental spread. The overall impact on the group of these regulatory changes was £(42)m at 31 December 2024.

Gross Life Premiums Written By Line of Business

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Insurance with profit participation	0	0	0
Index-linked and unit-linked insurance	0	0	0
Life annuities	3,267	4,137	6,252
Non-life annuities	0	0	0
Other life insurance	0	0	0
Health insurance	0	0	0
Total gross life premiums written	3,267	4,137	6,252

Gross Life Premiums Written By Country

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Home country	3,267	4,137	6,252
Country 1	0	0	0
Country 2	0	0	0
Country 3	0	0	0
Country 4	0	0	0
Country 5	0	0	0
Other countries	0	0	0
Total gross life premiums written	3,267	4,137	6,252

JRL's gross written premiums increased to £6.3bn [2023: £4.1bn] on the back of higher new business volumes.

Profit

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Profit (loss) before taxation	(222)	171	102
Taxation	60	(38)	(30)
Profit (loss) after taxation	(162)	132	72
Other comprehensive income	0	0	(2)
Dividends	0	0	0
Retained profit (loss)	(162)	132	70

Life Business Flows

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Net life premiums written	2,996	4,105	6,217
Net life claims incurred	(1,043)	(963)	(1,149)
Net flow of business	1,953	3,142	5,069

IFRS and business review

On an underlying operating profit basis, JRL reported a 36% increase to £492m at 31 December 2024 [2023 restated: £362m].

JRL reported an IFRS profit before tax of £102m in 2024 [2023: £170m], due to lower positive investment and economics variances of £10m [2023: £99m] primarily due to lower asset trading and other variances, and a smaller decrease in credit spreads in 2024 compared with 2023.

No dividend was paid [2023: nil].

Solvency II

JRL's net premiums increased from £4,105m to £6,217m. Net claims increased from £963m to £1,149m. This resulted in an increased net inflow of £5,069m [2023: £3,142m].

Company Analysis: Partnership Life Assurance Company Ltd

BASIC INFORMATION

Company Type
Life Insurer

Ownership & Control
See JRL

Year Established
2005

Country of Registration
UK

Head Office
Enterprise House, Bancroft Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 7RP

Contact
www.wearejust.co.uk/contact-us/

Key Personnel

Role	Name
See Just Retirement Ltd	

Company Background
PLACL was established in October 2005 to receive the business of the Pension Annuity Friendly Society (PAFS) following its demutualisation, the first ever by a UK Friendly Society. PAFS was founded in 1995 to provide financial services products for people with non-standard medical requirements. The Anderton Mortality Tables were constructed specifically for PAFS to assess the anticipated life expectancy for individuals with medical conditions. These were replaced with the Enhanced Mortality Tables (EMT) in 2004. 2008 saw the company change ownership, from Phoenix Equity Partners to Cinven Ltd. 2008 also saw a capital injection of £9.8m. There were also further drawdowns of its £16m subordinated debt arrangement with Lloyds Banking Group in 2008 and 2009 - at which stage it was fully drawn down. 2012 saw capital injections totalling £111.8m from funds raised partly by Cinven and partly by Lloyds Banking Group. This enabled the company to repay the subordinated debt and also, along with retained profits, substantially boost its solvency coverages. In October 2013, the company acquired B&CE's annuity portfolio. April 2016 saw the merger of Just Retirement with Partnership and the formation of JRP Group plc, now known as Just Group plc.

PLACL's principal activities are the run-off of life assurance and annuities and the writing of new UK Care business.

OPERATIONS

Governance System and Structure
See JRL

Risk Management
See JRL

Administration
See JRL

Benchmarks
See JRL

Outsourcing
See JRL

STRATEGY

Market Positioning
See JRL

Proposition
See JRL

KEY COMPANY FINANCIAL DATA

Last 3 reporting periods up to 31 December 2024

Assets

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Fixed interest	1,794	1,958	1,770
Equities	0	0	0
Collectives	390	346	336
Property	0	0	0
Linked	0	0	0
Derivatives	111	110	126
Loans and mortgages	1,300	1,310	1,204
Reinsurance recoverables	308	289	265
Cash	103	89	51
Other	138	134	162
Total Assets	4,145	4,236	3,914

Liabilities

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Technical provisions - non-life	0	0	0
Technical provisions - life	3,312	3,232	2,907
Other	418	579	634
Total Liabilities	3,730	3,811	3,541
Excess of assets over liabilities	415	425	374

Both assets and liabilities decreased by 8% and 7% respectively, in 2024. The excess of asset over liabilities also decreased, to £374m [2023: £425m].

The main asset classes are fixed interest (45% - reflecting the nature of the liabilities) and lifetime mortgages (31%).

Life Technical Provisions

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Insurance with profit participation	0	0	0
Index-linked and unit-linked insurance	0	0	0
Life annuities	3,312	3,232	2,907
Non-life annuities	0	0	0
Other life insurance	0	0	0
Health insurance	0	0	0
Total life and health technical provisions	3,312	3,232	2,907

Life Expenses

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Insurance with profit participation	0	0	0
Index-linked and unit-linked insurance	0	0	0
Life annuities	0	13	14
Non-life annuities	13	0	0
Other life insurance	0	0	0
Health insurance	0	0	0
Other expenses	9	2	1
Total life and health expenses	22	15	16

PLACL has one line of business under Solvency II: 'Life annuities', which reduced by 10% to £2.9bn [2023: £3.2bn].

Solvency Capital Requirement (SCR)

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Market risk	259	243	215
Counterparty default risk	5	5	1
Life underwriting risk	141	145	131
Health underwriting risk	0	0	0
Non-life underwriting risk	0	0	0
Diversification	(79)	(79)	(127)
Intangible asset risk	0	0	0
Operational risk	15	15	50
Capital add-ons already set	0	0	0
Other items	0	0	0
Solvency capital requirement	341	329	270

Eligible Own Funds

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Tier 1 unrestricted	343	358	359
Tier 1 restricted	50	50	0
Tier 2	167	164	135
Tier 3	3	0	0
Eligible own funds to meet SCR	563	572	494
Excess of own funds over SCR	222	243	224
SCR coverage ratio (%)	165.2	174.0	183.0

Just obtained approval for the use of an internal model for PLACL in 2024, which now enables the whole group to use an internal model.

The SCR coverage ratio including a recalculation of TMTP was 183% at 31 December 2024 [2023: 174%]. The increase in the ratio was primarily driven by the reduction of SCR reflecting the unwind of in-force business and market movements during the period.

The TMTP was last recalculated at 31 December 2024, and amounted to £146m at this date [2023: £312m].

In 2024, PLACL did not pay any dividends [2023: nil].

Gross Life Premiums Written By Line of Business

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Insurance with profit participation	0	0	0
Index-linked and unit-linked insurance	0	0	0
Life annuities	46	48	58
Non-life annuities	0	0	0
Other life insurance	0	0	0
Health insurance	0	0	0
Total gross life premiums written	46	48	58

Gross Life Premiums Written By Country

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Home country	46	48	58
Country 1	0	0	0
Country 2	0	0	0
Country 3	0	0	0
Country 4	0	0	0
Country 5	0	0	0
Other countries	0	0	0
Total gross life premiums written	46	48	58

Despite operating in run-off outside of new Care Plan business, PLACL saw Care premium growth from £47.7m to £57.8m in 2024, though still below pre-pandemic levels. Ongoing policy and funding uncertainty in the social care sector continues to affect market penetration, although fundamentals and sentiment do now suggest this as a potential growth area again.

Profit

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Profit (loss) before taxation	(86)	32	38
Taxation	22	(8)	(10)
Profit (loss) after taxation	(63)	24	28
Other comprehensive income	0	0	0
Dividends	(50)	0	0
Retained profit (loss)	(113)	24	28

Life Business Flows

	Dec 22 £m	Dec 23 £m	Dec 24 £m
Net life premiums written	45	47	57
Net life claims incurred	(156)	(297)	(310)
Net flow of business	(111)	(250)	(253)

IFRS and business review

There was a profit before tax of £38m in 2024 [2023: £32m]. The year on year change reflected an increase in the investment return on surplus assets, an increase in investment and economic profit to £9m [2023: £6m], and a reduction in finance costs to £18m [2023: £20m], following repayment of £50m of Tier 1 debt in April 2024.

No dividend was paid in 2024 [2023: nil].

Solvency II

With net earned premiums increasing to £57.0m [£47.1m] and net claims increasing to £310.1m [2023: £296.7m], there was an increased net outflow of £253.2m [2023: £249.6m].

Guide

INTRODUCTION

For over 30 years AKG has particularly focused on the financial strength requirements of financial advisers, who when acting on behalf of their clients, need to ascertain a company's ability to deliver sustained provision.

From this customer perspective, the financial strength of companies needs to be focused at an operational level, specifically on the company that is effecting the product or service that a customer is selecting. This is important, because from the customer's perspective it is that company (not some higher corporate entity) that needs to survive in a form that maintains the requisite operational characteristics to meet their fairly held requirements. And it is thus at this level that the selection needs of the customers' advisers must be met.

It is also important to understand the sector approach (comparative peer groups) that is adopted in financial strength assessment and rating process.

At AKG, this is again driven by the end customer perspective and the fact that assessment is designed solely for this purpose, i.e. as a component in helping customers' advisers to select between comparable companies competing to deliver relevant products or services.

AKG's focus and approach has remained consistent over the years since it commenced assessment and rating support for the market. However, coverage, format and presentation has rightly evolved over this period, in line with the needs and expectations of assessment and rating users in the market. And AKG considers further changes on a continual basis.

Further details including an explanation of what is included in the assessment reports and coverage can be found online at https://www.akg.co.uk/information/reports.

AKG's process for assessment and rating is to use a balanced scorecard of measures and comparative information, relevant to the companies contained within each peer group. This is gathered via Public Information only for non-participatory assessments and public information plus company interactions with companies for participatory assessments. Further details on AKG's process can be found at https://www.akg.co.uk/information/reports.

This includes further information on the different participatory and non-participatory basis and for companies wishing to learn more about participatory assessment AKG is pleased to outline this and welcomes contact.

This is a participatory assessment.

RATING DEFINITIONS

Overall Financial Strength Rating
The objective is to provide a simple indication of the general financial strength of a company from the perspective of those financial advisers who when acting on behalf of their clients need to ascertain a company's ability to deliver sustained operational provision of products or services.

The overall rating inherently reflects the mix of business within the company, since different types of customer or policyholder have different requirements and expectations, and the company may have particular strengths and weaknesses in respect of its key product or service areas. However, it also takes account of comparison across the sector in which it is assessed.

The rating takes into account those of the following criteria which are relevant (depending upon the company's mix of business in-force): capital and asset position, expense position and profitability, structure (and size) of funds within the company, parental strength (and likely attitude towards supporting the company), operational capability, management strength and capability, strategic position and rationale, brand and image, typical fund performance achievements or product / service features, its operating environment and ability to withstand external forces.

Rating Scale	A	B+	B	B-	C	D	▣
	Superior	Very Strong	Strong	Effective	Challenged	Very Challenged	Not applicable

With Profits Financial Strength Rating
The objective is to provide a simple indication of the with profits financial strength of a company, where it currently offers with profits business or has existing with profits business within it.

This is from the perspective of those financial advisers who when acting on behalf of their clients, for this product type, need to ascertain a company's ability to deliver sustained operational provision of with profits funds, products or propositions. Its comparison is with other companies within the assessment sector that offer or have with profits business.

The main criteria taken into account are: capital and asset position, expense position and profitability, the amount of with profits business in-force, parental strength (and likely attitude towards supporting the company), and image and strategy.

NOTE: More detailed analysis of with profits companies is included in AKG's UK Life Office With Profits Reports.

Rating Scale	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★	▣
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Not Rated

Unit Linked Financial Strength Rating
The objective is to provide a simple indication of the unit linked financial strength of a company, where it currently offers unit linked business or has existing unit linked business within it. This is from the perspective of those financial advisers who when acting on behalf of their clients, for this product type, need to ascertain a company's ability to deliver sustained operational provision of unit linked products or propositions. Its comparison is with other companies within the assessment sector that offer or have unit linked business.

The main criteria taken into account are: capital and asset position, expense position and profitability, structure (and size) of funds within the company, parental strength (and likely attitude towards supporting the company), operational capability, management strength and capability, strategic position and rationale, brand and image, typical fund performance achievements or product / service features, its operating environment and ability to withstand external forces.

Rating Scale	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★	▣
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Not Rated

Non Profit Financial Strength Rating
The objective is to provide a simple indication of the non profit financial strength of a company, where it currently offers or has existing products and propositions such as term assurance and annuities. This focuses on the company's ability to deliver sustained operational provision of such non profit products or propositions. Its comparison is with other companies within the assessment sector that offer or have non profit business.

The main criteria taken into account are: capital and asset position, expense position and profitability, structure (and size) of funds within the company, parental strength (and likely attitude towards supporting the company), operational capability, management strength and capability, strategic position and rationale, brand and image, product / service features, its operating environment and ability to withstand external forces.

Rating Scale	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★	▣
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Not Rated

Service Rating
The objective is to assess the quality of the organisation's service to the intermediary market in respect of the brand concerned.

Criteria taken into account include: performance in surveys, awards and benchmarking exercises (external and internal), the organisation's philosophy, service charters, the extent of investments designed to improve service, and feedback from intermediaries.

Rating Scale	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★	▣
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Not Rated

Image & Strategy Rating
The objective is to assess the effectiveness of the means by which the organisation currently positions itself to distribute its products for the brand concerned and the plans it has to maintain and/or develop its position.

Criteria taken into account include: overall trends in the company's market share position, brand visibility and reputation, feedback from intermediaries and industry commentators, and AKG's view of the company's general strategy.

Rating Scale	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★	▣
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Not Rated

Business Performance Rating
This review is an assessment of how the company and the brand has fared against its peers, and how it is perceived externally. Effectively this is how it has performed recently in the market. Whilst it will include performance indicators from the most recent available statutory reporting (report and accounts and SFCRs in the case of insurance companies, for example) it will also draw on other recent key performance elements before and after such disclosure, up to the point at which the assessment is undertaken.

Criteria taken into account include: increase/decrease in market shares, expense containment, publicity good or bad, press or market commentary, regulatory fines, and competitive position.

Rating Scale	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★	▣
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Not Rated

ABOUT AKG

AKG is an independent organisation. Originally established as an actuarial consultancy AKG has, for over 30 years, specialised in the provision of assessment, ratings, information and market assistance to the financial services industry.

As the market has evolved over this period, the range of entities considered by AKG has expanded. Consequently, AKG has brought additional skill sets into its operations. This has meant the inclusion of accounting, corporate finance, IT and market intelligence experience, alongside actuarial resources, to deliver an expanded professional capability.

Today AKG's core purpose is in the provision of financial analysis and review services to support the wider financial services sector and its customers.

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