

# Planning for retirement? Here's how to manage your business assets smartly

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For many business owners, running a company is more than a job, it's a lifetime's work. But when the time comes to retire, there's a lot to consider beyond just stepping away from day-to-day operations. One of the biggest practical challenges is deciding what to do with your business's physical assets: machinery, stock, equipment, or even entire premises.

Whether you're passing the business on, scaling down, or closing it altogether, dealing with surplus assets efficiently can make a real difference to your retirement plans.

## Why asset disposal matters

Unused equipment and surplus stock don't just gather dust, they take up valuable space and tie up capital that could be better used elsewhere, whether that's invested into retirement funds, used for travel, or simply to enjoy a new lifestyle chapter.

According to the [Federation of Small Businesses](#) (FSB), over 250,000 UK small business owners are expected to retire, sell, or otherwise exit their business within the next five years. With so many businesses due to change hands or close, managing physical assets effectively is becoming a key part of retirement planning.

The challenge is often finding the right way to sell these items quickly, fairly, and at a price that reflects their real market value. Traditional private sales can be slow and uncertain, while scrapping valuable items can feel like a waste.

That's why it's worth considering professional asset disposal routes, like online auctions, as part of your

retirement strategy.

## How to approach selling your business assets

Take stock early: make a clear inventory of everything you no longer need. You might be surprised at what holds value in the current market. A 2024 report by the British Business Bank noted that around 38% of small business owners underestimate the resale value of their equipment and physical assets, missing opportunities to convert these into valuable capital for retirement.

Get accurate valuations: understanding what your assets are worth today can help shape your retirement plans and set realistic expectations. Specialist asset valuation firms or auction houses can often provide free or low-cost assessments, giving you a clearer picture of your asset base.

Consider your selling options: From private sales to auctions and private treaty deals, there are several ways to sell business assets. Each comes with its own pros and cons depending on how quickly you need to sell, what you're selling, and the likely demand.

Online auctions have grown significantly in popularity in recent years, especially post-pandemic. A recent study by IBISWorld indicated that the UK online auction market is expected to reach £1.8 billion in revenue in 2025, driven largely by businesses and individuals seeking efficient, transparent ways to buy and sell surplus goods.

Look for hassle-free solutions: managing sales logistics can be time-consuming. Many retiring business owners choose to work with professional services that handle everything from valuations and marketing to sales and collections.

## Where asset disposal specialists can help

One option to explore is working with an established online asset disposal service like [BPI](#).

Disposal specialists offer a straightforward way to sell surplus business assets, with services covering valuation, marketing, and sales through our online platform. It's a particularly useful route for those looking for a quick, transparent, and competitive way to release value from unwanted equipment and stock.

James Mellars, Commercial Director at BPI said: "Across 2024, we saw an increasing demand from asset-heavy sectors, including woodworking, engineering, fleet and industrial, areas that remain resilient as many traditional, family-run, or owner-led businesses transition due to retirement.

"These retirements often involve significant resale value in tools, plant, and equipment and highlight why tailored, hassle-free disposal solutions are in increasing demand.

"Beyond just selling items, these services help vendors manage both the financial and emotional aspects of exiting a long-held business."

Many business owners have successfully used online auctions as part of their retirement planning — freeing up both space and funds to support whatever comes next, whether that's investing in property, travelling the world, or simply enjoying well-earned downtime.



If you're beginning to plan your exit strategy, now's the time to consider your options, get advice, and explore services that can make the transition simpler and more profitable.