

# An asset to the community

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*Melissa Longley, Longley Asset Management*



In early 1975, when Melissa Longley, now CEO of Longley Asset Management, was 11 years old, she wrote a letter to the Queen to tell her about a piece of rock that she'd picked up in a disused Welsh goldmine during a family caravanning holiday. “Right in the middle was a speck of glinting gold,” she recalls. “I suggested to the Queen that reopening the mine might solve the economic challenges the country was facing at the time.”

Although Her Majesty didn't decree the reopening of the mine, that letter serves as a wonderful predictor of Melissa's entrepreneurial spirit, and of her future in portfolio management. The reply from Buckingham Palace, and the rock, remain treasured possessions. After working her way up from secretary for a merchant bank, to stockbroker at Lehman Brothers, to Director and Head of Advisory Fund Management at Kleinwort Benson, she now runs her own successful eponymous company, established in 2004. She is a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment (CISI), and a founder member of the Guild of Investment Managers. Ballet has always been her passion; she still takes regular classes and exams.

“Longley provides a traditional service, but we're forward-looking, creative and modern thinking,” she says. “Everyone's doing it now, but we've been offering online meetings to clients – some are overseas – for many years. We have always traded online and specialise in providing investment services for US expats living in the UK, who have complicated tax requirements.”

She is keen to support other women working in the City by mentoring, and is a longstanding member of City Women Network. She was vice chair of the women's health charity, Endometriosis UK, and is a founding trustee of the Investment Managers' Charitable Trust. “We want to encourage more young people to come into the industry and to look at it as a career,” she says.

As Longley is small, and without a heavy committee structure, it can offer a highly personalised, tailored service. “We are nimble and flexible, and our clients can always speak directly to us,” says Melissa. “We want to share our knowledge and our passion with them. It's always delightful when we get a referral, or are passed on to the next generation of a family.”

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