

ATT Welcome, August 2017

Welcomes

01 August 2017

Change is the only constant

Welcome to my first page written as ATT Deputy President. I would like to thank Graham Batty for passing on the baton – he is a hard act to follow. I look back at the raft of past Presidents and wonder how I can compete? We had the brilliant film quizzes from Natalie Miller and Michael Steed's amazing military references. I cannot make any promises for things like that but I hope you will find the welcomes that I write for this magazine of interest.

As I embark on the next 12 months as Deputy President, I will begin this article with a look back to the start of my career. I began my career in tax many years ago. I applied for a clerical role in another department of the Civil Service and tax was not on my horizon at all. I was unsuccessful at that interview but a few weeks later I received a letter telling me to report to the local office of the Inland Revenue. I took the plunge, resigned from the job I had only to watch five people hand in their notice on my first day. I had to admit to thinking 'Oh good grief, what on earth have I done?' but here we are some 30-plus years later.

I enjoyed my time with HMRC (as it is now) but left after a few years to work in two local tax consultancy firms before taking another plunge and starting my own business in 2003. Working on your own can be quite daunting so I attended a meeting at my local ATT/CIOT Branch to meet other professionals in the area. That first local branch meeting has led me to meet wonderful people and make some of the best friends a person could ask for.

We should all be proud of our branch network and the branch volunteers contribute a great deal to the aims of the ATT. I hope to talk more about this great asset we have in future pages. In the meantime, members can look forward to receiving their 2017/18 branches programme of events in the September issue of Tax Adviser.

I have recently finished my time as Chairman of the Joint Professional Standards Committee which was an honour and so enjoyable. This included seeing first-hand the huge amount of work involved after the challenge issued by the government in 2015 to our profession. Our standards were brought to the fore and the hardworking teams at Artillery House led by CIOT's John Cullinane along with the other professional bodies have produced the new, Professional Conduct in Relation to Taxation (PCRT), which came into effect earlier this year.

Some of my time with the Professional Standards Team involved working on the birth of our Annual Return. I cannot believe it is in its fifth year and, if you have not already completed your form for 2017, please visit the website to make a start. This will be the last time you will need to do this at this time of year as it will be aligned with the subscription process in future years.

Another reminder for you: in the June issue of Tax Adviser (page 45) our Technical Teams mentioned the deadline of 31 August for the Client Notification Letters. Do not let this one slip by, especially in the summer holiday season.

In June I attended the ATT Annual Conference in London. What a good day this was – a great group of attendees and some excellent tax facts provided by Michael Steed. We also had the pleasure of having Charlotte Ali from Professional Standards and Will Silsby from our Technical Team with us who provided updates on PCRT and Making Tax Digital (MTD) penalties. If you have the opportunity to attend one of our conferences next year please do, I think they are excellent value for money, allow you to meet fellow members and provide some always needed CPD.

Booking is now open for AAT-ATT Sharpen Your Tax Skills Series 2017 which will start its UK tour in October. This is an interactive, case studies based day in which delegates will examine and discuss common areas that AAT and ATT members encounter.

So here I am in this wonderful world of tax and part of this amazing ATT family. Our Immediate Past President, Ralph Pettengell, often refers to the ATT as a family and that is what we are, here to support each other. It is a huge honour for me to have been asked to be involved in the Presidential 'route' and I will do my very best for you all.

Change is the only 'constant' in tax and with MTD in our not too distant future I feel nothing will 'change' there!

Have a good month, everyone.