# Working Together: new Agent Forum

**General Features**

01 October 2017

The new Working Together Agent Forum has now gone live. Here's how to get involved, and why you should do so.

Readers of Jon Stride's article 'Piloting a new course' in the February issue of *Tax Adviser* will be aware of the working together agent forum that HMRC had been piloting. I am pleased to say that the new Agent Forum is now live and functional.

The idea of the Agent Forum is simple – agents can report problems with HMRC systems, processes etc on the forum, and other agents can comment and contribute. HMRC monitor the forum and can immediately start looking into the issues, identifying whether these are client-specific, or potential widespread issues. The Issues Overview Group (IOG) then review potential widespread issues to determine whether these should be moved to current (that is actual) widespread issues and then agree with HMRC to allocate a Working Together reference number and a priority rating. HMRC take up the issue with the relevant business area, whilst encouraging further responses from the agent community if required.

So, the key advantages of the forum are twofold. First, it gives the agent community an opportunity to report problems to HMRC in real time. Secondly, it enables agents to see whether the issues they are experiencing are also being faced by others, and what is being done about them.

## How to join the Agent Forum

Joining the Agent Forum is a simple, two-stage process. The Agent Forum is hosted in a private area solely for agents on the HMRC Online Forum. Therefore you must first be enrolled on the HMRC Online Forum (step 1) in order to access the Agent Forum (step 2).

## Step 1

Type in the link https://online.hmrc.gov.uk/webchatprod/community/forums/list.page .

- Click on ‘Register’ in the top right hand corner of the page.
- Read and (if you are content) click ‘I agree to these terms’.
- Complete the following details:
- User (your forename and surname)
- Email address (please use your assigned work email address that identifies your firm/organisation, or the email address you have used to register for Digital Working Together if so registered)
- Create and confirm a password
- Press submit

## Step 2

- Once you have done step 1, you then need to request access to the private Agent Forum. You do this by emailing agentforum.wt@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk with the following identity information:
- Your forename and surname
- Confirmation of assigned work email address
- The name of your firm/organisation
- The name of your professional body/ies
- Your professional body registration number/reference.

Once you’ve emailed HMRC, they will be in touch to confirm your acceptance. After this, you will have access to the new Agent Forum from the original link at step 1.

A more detailed article on the Agent Forum will appear in a future issue of *Tax Adviser,* but in the meantime why not register and take a look around? The more agents join and contribute, the more successful the forum will be.