ATT welcome, July 2018

Welcomes

01 July 2018

12 months on

Hello to you all. Well, it seems like only yesterday I was sitting down to write my first page for Tax Adviser – and here I am a year later.

The first of many highlights of my year as your deputy president was the Sussex Branch 40th Anniversary event. A sunny day on Brighton seafront with those responsible for setting up my local branch with friends and colleagues from ATT and CIOT. I was recently asked by the branch to bring their 40th year to a close by cutting a celebratory cake at the branch AGM.

I was lucky enough to attend the Joint Presidents' Lunch held in Cardiff in October. An opportunity for us and colleagues from CIOT to spend time with those involved in tax in Wales. As you may remember, the first attempt at the Joint Presidents' lunch in Edinburgh was thwarted by 'the beast from the east' but a re-run in May was well attended and enjoyed by those involved with tax over the border. With the devolved taxes that are now in place in Wales and Scotland our involvement with our colleagues in those nations is even more important.

To help with my CPD obligations I was able to attend one of the ATT conferences and the joint AAT & ATT Masterclass in London together with the CIOT Conference in Cambridge. All of these have been invaluable to me in updating knowledge needed for running my own practice. The conferences are good value, and we will be trying out new venues for the AAT & ATT Masterclasses in the Autumn. We are also considering holding half day conferences run by our Technical Officers in more remote locations next year. If you have any thoughts on this or suggestions for locations please drop me a line.

The Branches Conference was held in Warwick at the end of February and I was pleased to spend time with other volunteers from across the branch network together with staff from Artillery House. A great event – I am sure all who attended will agree.

The loss of the great Chris Jones was the saddest part of the past year for us all. Much has been said of the loss we all feel and our thoughts remain with his family always.
One of the biggest honours for me in the past year has been to attend the Admission Ceremonies at the House of Lords and the prize winner's lunch. These events have allowed me to meet our newest members and congratulate them all on their great achievements. It was great to see that one of our prizewinners had come through the Apprenticeship route, we are hoping to see many more now that the new Trailblazer Apprenticeship has been in place for nearly a year.

In addition to meeting new members over the past 12 months, I have met colleagues from both our industry and others and I am so looking forward to meeting them all again over the next 12 months as I take over from Graham as President.

Last month, we teamed up with CIOT to express our shared concerns to the media at any move to reduce the £85,000 VAT threshold without additional help for businesses to smooth their transition to becoming VAT registered. This was after a joint survey of CIOT and ATT members gathered evidence to inform the organisations' separate responses to the Treasury. Around 60 per cent of respondees gave their number one reason for small businesses managing the VAT registration threshold as being due to price pressure from non-VAT registered competitors. And a total of 74 per cent of respondents to the survey thought that Making Tax Digital for VAT due to start next April was a further reason for small businesses to want to remain below the VAT threshold because most respondents thought it would increase the administrative burdens on business.

Finally, I would like to give my thanks to some people – to those at Artillery House who have helped me these past 12 months – you know who you are! I am hoping you will continue to help me as I move along the line; to my fellow members of Council for their help and to Graham who has been another great in the long line of 'greats' as our President, and, lastly but by no means least, a thank you to you all for reading my page.

So, my friends, that is all from me as your deputy president. I pass this honour on to my friend and colleague, Jeremy Coker. I know I am leaving this page in safe hands. Over to you, Jeremy!