President’s page

Welcomes

28 July 2021

Magic moments

I hope this finds you all in good spirits. If you are a ble to get away for a holiday, I also wish you a recuperative and enjoyable break. These are still particularly challenging days for us and I think we are naturally going to be hesitant returning to our pre-Covid 19 lifestyles for some time yet. The pandemic has certainly changed the way we see the world and taught us to appreciate some basic values, such as a sense of community, volunteering for the NHS, and giving ‘something back’.

We have seen this through the commitment of our strong army of volunteer members who have been particularly supportive throughout the Covid-19 disruption. (Online meetings, of course, have made volunteer engagement much more efficient timewise.) With the barrage of government support schemes and new tax rules and regulations, our work has taken on even greater importance. Thankfully, our dedicated volunteer network has helped our Institute to rise to these challenges, whether this be scrutinising legislation or HMRC procedures on one of our many technical committees through to helping with our successful online technical debates, webinars and conferences. This is all vital work in assisting us to fulfil our tax education remit and helping to improve the fairness of the tax system.

In 2020, we had some 680 volunteers across CIOT and ATT Committees, Steering Groups and Councils, who together contributed 19,922 hours. That is pretty amazing! We have just sent out a special survey so that we can enhance our engagement with our volunteer community even further.

A breakdown of Committee membership by our various operational and management streams is shown below:

Volunteer ‘thank you’ event

I never waste any opportunity to thank our volunteers for their time and support. The backing and support of our members' firms is also greatly appreciated. While the constraints of the pandemic still prevent us from holding our prestigious receptions, I was so pleased that we were able to put together a fantastic online evening event on 1 July for our volunteers to show our sincere appreciation of their valuable contributions. We had over 80 members joining us on the night and our enthusiastic blue-badge guides offered a choice of one of the four virtual tours:

- Bombing with Banksy and Co. The graffiti and street art of Shoreditch and Spitalfields.
- Lights, camera… action! Brooms at the ready to zoom across the capital in search of the many film locations used in the Harry Potter film franchise!
- Curtain Up! A virtual tour of Theatreland!
- From Bowie to the Beatles. London's rock 'n' roll history.

I chose the 'Music' tour (of course!), which was engaging, great fun and very informative, but I think I would have enjoyed any of the tours. Our guests really loved it and we are considering a repeat event later this year for those volunteers who were unable to make it. Magic moments indeed!

Happy together

We are always looking for new volunteers to offer their support and expertise. It is a great way to enhance and develop new skills and gain valuable experience. You will find that there is something very satisfying contributing to our profession, government and the wider public. And it's never too late – our doors are open to students and newly qualifieds, as well as experienced tax professionals. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please visit our website at www.tax.org.uk/networking.
Finally, I would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to Jeremy Coker (who stepped down as ATT President last month) – who in footballing parlance has put in a 'massive shift'. Jeremy has made a superb contribution to the ATT for the benefit of members, students and the public, and both Glyn Fullelove and I have welcomed his support and time when discussing matters of mutual interest.

And good luck and congratulations to Richard Todd – Jeremy's successor.

Keep safe and take care.

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