President’s page

Welcomes

06 September 2021

Heart and soul

I hope you are all enjoying the summer a nd have managed to enjoy some form of relaxation. Let’s hope there is more good weather to come in September. With the easing of the Covid restrictions, there are signs that our daily life is slowly returning to some degree of normality. For me, experiencing the highly charged atmosphere of a live West Ham United match is something that I have been longing for! Nevertheless, it is clear that the angst of Covid will be with us for many months yet. We must therefore still take care and remain collectively responsible for everyone’s wellbeing.

Branch events

September marks the return of our branch events, with an almost ‘back to school’ frenzy. As I have said before, I am particularly proud of the way that the CIOT and the branch network have responded to the challenges created by the pandemic.

Since the start of the March 2020 lockdown, we have broadcast 158 webinar events and have registered over 39,600 attendees – well over half the capacity of the London Stadium! We’ve been proud to have delivered a diverse range of online content, often chaired by your local branches. It’s been great to hear local and regional voices, and the content from Scotland and the new Global CTA events has been very well received. Our new speaker programme is thriving as we seek to support and present you with a diversity of relevant knowledge and experience. And we have received great feedback on these events, which is testament to the high levels of your engagement with our CPD programme.

A number of you have asked about the proposed timing of our return to face to face branch meetings. This has been a difficult question as it requires weighing up many factors against the continuing uncertainty posed by Covid. It is also important that

branches can plan future events with some confidence. With this in mind, we have decided that our branch events will continue totally in an online format for the remainder of 2021. We hope to be able to return to face to face events in 2022.

Branch programmes for 2022: have your say

As the branch committees begin to plan their regional programmes for 2022, they would really appreciate hearing from you. In particular, we would be very interested to hear from members who can't wait to return to face to face events and equally those who are happy to continue participating online! Please have your say to help branches shape their future activities
by taking part in our short online survey at www.tax.org.uk/branchsurveys
and www.att.org.uk/branchsurveys.

Our webinar syllabus is entirely curated by members and students. Therefore, if there is a particular subject that you wish to see covered, please let our new online branch working group and your local branch committee know through this survey.

The new 'Firm Passport'

I am also excited to let you know about our new 'Firm Passport' pilot scheme. This will give the partners and employees of your firm access to online and face to face CPD at special rates. If your firm is interested in buying a passport, please email branches@tax.org.uk.

Special thanks

Our fantastic branch events do not just happen without the dedication and hard work from a number of people. I want to give special thanks to our Head of Member Services Emma Barklamb, the Branch Network Manager Andrea Gale, Kate Epps and Hannah Gardner. They have given tremendous support and encouragement to our branch volunteers in moving their planned programmes online seamlessly.

The success of our online webinars has led to the creation of a newly formed online branch. The online branch working group, chaired by Dan Ellerton of East Midlands Branch, will take forward our online offering for the remainder of 2021 and beyond. I would also like to recognise the supportive guidance of the Branch Co-Chairs Jo Routier and Zoe Roberts. Finally, special appreciation goes to our Branch Chairs and their committees who have been incredibly encouraging and understanding of our

approach, as well as adaptable to change whilst balancing their professional and other personal commitments.

Heart and soul

I’m extremely proud of our wide Branch Network and its vibrant community of members, students and volunteers. Our branch network really does form the heart and soul of our great Institute. Personally, I cannot wait for face to face events to return to meet all my friends and colleagues in our wonderful tax family. Till then, keep safe…

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