President’s page

Welcomes

03 November 2021

The Wind Beneath My Wings

I hope that you have enjoyed the late summer sun and are managing to do at least some of the things that you enjoy. It looks like autumn is now definitely upon us and by the time you read this the nights will certainly be drawing in.

Well done to all our tax colleagues who successfully navigated the 10km London Legal Walk in October to raise funds for the Bridge The Gap tax charities – TaxAid and Tax Help for Older People. I am very proud of our Institute’s charitable objectives and we continue to play a pivotal role in helping and supporting everyone with their tax. And that includes those who can’t afford to pay for tax advice.

Bridge The Gap

As tax advisers, we know from our own families that not only businesses and better off people have to deal with tax problems. They can also affect people on very low incomes. When these people can’t afford to pay for professional tax advice, the issues can become very distressing and serious for them.

The Institute formed the Low Incomes Tax Reform Group (LITRG) to research and campaign for people who otherwise don’t have a voice. LITRG does a wonderful job in these areas and is listened to by government, as well as helping millions through the advice it gives on its website.
But many people with tax problems also need bespoke personal advice. And if they can’t afford to pay for it, where do they turn? This is where TaxAid and Tax Help for Older People provide much needed support and advice. Each year, these two sister charities help around 17,000 vulnerable people.

TaxAid focuses on people of working age; Tax Help for Older People specialises in assisting the over 60s. Every day, these charities help people who are facing real

difficulties with their taxes. Their helplines often hear from people who are dealing with loss of business, or bereavement, learning difficulties, mental health problems, pension scams, exploitation, and many other challenges. For many of those who need their help, tax is not their only problem.

During the pandemic, the two charities did a fantastic job launching two new services which helped over 6,000 people apply for essential government income support when their livelihoods were destroyed. The tax advice and assistance provided by these charities can often be life changing for their clients, relieving them of the huge stress and sleepless nights they will have experienced. The help they give resolves their tax and related issues and lets them get on with their lives.

Client's feedback

It's heart-warming to hear some of the great client feedback received by the charities. The following examples clearly show how huge burdens have been removed and the beneficial effect the support has on people's lives:

'I could never have managed this alone. Charles was so very kind and patient. It has taken away an enormous stress. I cannot thank you enough.'

'I have a disability and was very ill at the time. But the staff were very helpful. They listened to me with great patience and spoke in a way I understood. They made me feel a person, not just someone. I am so grateful for all their help and support.'

Some important numbers about the two charities are provided in the box below.

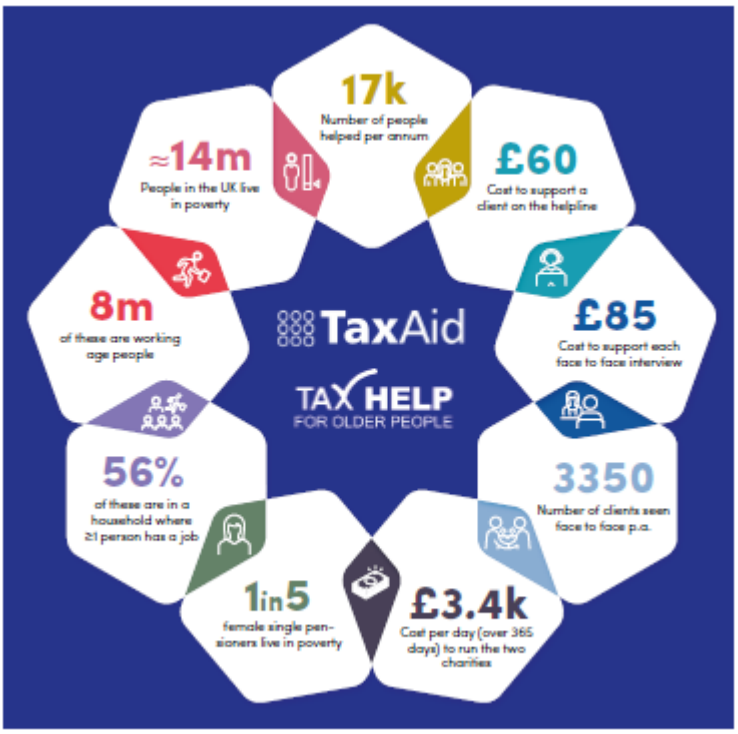
The charities have had a particularly challenging time during the pandemic. If you would like to help, for example with fundraising or as a volunteer, or would like to make a donation, please contact Rose Over at rose.over@taxvol.org.uk – the PA to Valerie Boggs, the joint CEO for the two charities.

Online CIOT events

Finally, don't forget we have a fantastic line-up of online events, many of which are free, to take you through the autumn and winter. Check them out.

Till next time, keep safe…

Image



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