President' page, September 2016

Welcomes

01 September 2016

A warm welcome to everyone connected to the ATT, from your new president

On 7 July at the AGM I took over as the president of the ATT from Michael Steed. It is an honour to be your president and I am looking forward to meeting as many of you as I can over the coming year. In my speech at the AGM I set out my goals for the year. For those of you that could not make the AGM, for the first time ever the speeches have been filmed and placed on the ATT website for all our members, stakeholders and staff to view.

You don’t have to watch the full version, although this is available for those of you that do, as there are edited highlights in a five minute version. I would like to thank the staff at Artillery House for suggesting this and making it happen.

For those of you that are not dashing to your computer to switch on the highlights I will explain our plans for the forthcoming year in the body of this article.

Firstly, I would like to reiterate that we are moving into a significant period of change with Making Tax Digital. This is the biggest change to the way taxpayers and their agents will engage with HMRC since PAYE came in 70 years ago. We are currently planning on how we will help all our members manage this change.

The ATT membership is made up of members with an age range that spans more than 60 years with representation from all corners of the globe.

All our members are considered equal and when we plan our strategy for the future we have to take into account the differing needs of our members.

Not all our members are on Facebook or enjoy social media so our plans on helping you through this period of change will be delivered in a variety of ways.

The key initiatives that I want to deliver during my presidential year are as follows:

- We will, with our colleagues at CIOT and other professional bodies such as ICAEW, AAT, STEP help HMRC to deliver a sensible and workable solution to the challenge laid down by Government to clear up unethical behaviour within the profession so that we can continue to be proud and hold our heads up high and avoid future poor media coverage of the Tax profession.
- We will help our members and stakeholders through the changes that Making Tax Digital will bring by:

1. Continuing dialogue with HMRC at the most senior levels to steer them down a sensible path so that their Making Tax Digital policy is deliverable and workable.
2. Responding to the raft of consultation documents that have now been published to point out at the earliest stage in the policy process where HMRC ideas are unworkable. In addition we will help HMRC where appropriate to develop alternative solutions.
3. Delivering training for our members, their employers and our stakeholders so that you have a clear understanding of the changes and how this will impact your income stream from delivering tax services.
4. Developing a forum for our members to share ideas and solve problems as Making Tax Digital is introduced into the tax world.

There are two ways I plan to deliver these initiatives – firstly I have made sure my objectives are embedded in my executive director's performance agreement so that she drives forward their delivery and secondly through putting this at the top of the ATT Council's agenda so we are constantly abreast of the latest developments in the Making Tax Digital world.

The final part of my speech was to thank all the volunteers and staff who have made the ATT such a huge success. It is only with the support of our volunteers, staff and members that we will collectively continue to be the leading tax compliance body in the United Kingdom during my presidential year and beyond.