ATT Welcome: How can you help?

Welcomes



23 August 2023

Hello and welcome to the Deputy President’s page for September. I hope you have all managed to get some well deserved holiday time over the last couple of months.

At our July AGM, I took over the role of Deputy President from Simon Groom, who is now our President, and I look forward to continuing to work with Simon and our new Vice President Graham Batty as part of the ATT Leadership Team. Graham’s name will probably be familiar to many of you as a former President of ATT. Yes, the role is so rewarding that Graham is willing to do it twice!

Before we go any further, I should give you a few words of introduction about myself. I worked for several years as a bookkeeper and management accountant before deciding that a slight career change into the world of tax would be an interesting move! I joined a small four partner firm in November 2000 and sat my ATT exams in a single sitting, passing with distinction. In 2017, I took up the offer of a post with Johnston Carmichael where I am a Tax Senior Manager working in private client tax. I assist our Head of Private Client Tax in managing the compliance side of our tax team.

I first became involved with volunteering for the ATT when at one of the Scottish Spring Conferences, Will Silsby, who will be known to many of you as one of our then technical officers, spoke to the room about joining the band of volunteers who contribute towards the ATT responses to HMRC consultations. I thought I would give it a go and soon became involved in responding to consultations on the extension of averaging period for farmers, the identification of Scottish taxpayers and many more. It is very satisfying to feel that you are, in a small part, helping to shape tax legislation – even though occasionally it doesn't go in the direction you would wish.

I was then invited to become part of the ATT Technical Steering Group (TSG). The TSG supports our four Technical Officers in sharing our members' views with HMRC and other bodies, highlighting tax issues to the general public and supporting our members to understand changes in legislation, to name a view of the many tasks they perform.

I will always remember my first meeting, suffering on my journey down to London from a feeling of imposter syndrome. I was someone working for a small firm in a small city. What on earth was I doing? I found the ATT office and was welcomed so warmly by the then joint chairs Michael Steed and Yvette Nunn that I immediately felt at ease. Not long into the meeting, I realised that I was where I was meant to be. This was a special meeting with Rebecca Benneyworth giving a talk on the recently announced Making Tax Digital. More than seven years later, we are still waiting on MTD for ITSA…

I was invited to become a council member in December 2017 and chair of the TSG in July 2022.

I would like to use my first article to encourage you to consider what you could do to support your professional body. The ATT is so much more than just a means to obtain a professional qualification and maintain your CPD.

There may be a local branch that you can join and help on their committee. You may, like me, be really interested in the technical side of tax and could become one of our contributors. There are several steering groups or committees within the ATT that may appeal to you – have a look on our website. Perhaps you could give a talk at an event organised by our New Tax Professionals committee – a committee formed to help members of ATT or CIOT in the first ten years of their careers. Perhaps your firm has premises that could be used for events. We also have

materials that you can use to present sessions on tax to your local school. The list is endless.

We would be interested to hear from anyone who feels they have something to contribute. I guarantee that you would find it rewarding and empowering. You would also enhance your skills and build long lasting professional relationships.