Make the most of your membership: support your branch

Briefings



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Engage with your local branch and take full advantage of the resources available to you. Your professional growth depends on it! CIOT President Charlotte Barbour shares her thoughts.

As President, I often get asked about my role and whether I enjoy it. The answer is a resounding yes! My year has been filled with opportunities to connect with fellow members and participate in both social and technical branch events. These branches are essential for networking and staying updated on industry changes.

Throughout my time with the CIOT, I've primarily engaged with the branch network locally. This year, however, I've had the privilege of attending events across the country. I want to share some highlights to encourage you to engage with your local branches.

In-person technical events

Recently, the East Midlands branch held its annual one-day technical conference in Belper, Derbyshire. This exemplified what the CIOT does best: offering a range of technical updates presented by members for members. The morning session provided valuable insights into advising owner-managed businesses, featuring practical examples that consolidated various points. The afternoon included topical updates that broadened our knowledge base.

Every face-to-face meeting reinforces the benefits of in-person interactions. Stepping away from my desk allows for better concentration, and discussing tax points informally with colleagues enhances understanding. The East Midlands branch also organised a dinner after the conference, making the day even more enjoyable.

This autumn, I'm looking forward to specialist events like the Indirect Taxes Conference on 12 November, and the 25thCross Atlantic and European Tax Symposium on 14 November, hosted by the European Branch and ADIT in collaboration with the International Fiscal Association UK Branch.

In-person social events

I encourage you to join branch social activities. The Leeds branch recently hosted an enjoyable 'end of year' tax party in an Italian tapas bar, complete with food, wine and networking opportunities. Similarly, the Manchester branch's evening event in July was a success.

You can find upcoming events listed atwww.tax.org.uk/local-branches. All members and students receive our twice-weekly emails about local events. If you're not receiving these or would like to suggest events, please contact branches@tax.org.uk .

Continuing professional development (CPD)

Ongoing CPD is crucial for professionalism. HMRC's 'Raising Standards' initiative is examining CPD undertaken by tax advisers, focusing on its effectiveness. The CIOT and ATT branch network offers a wide range of CPD opportunities, both in-person and online, along with social events. I encourage you to actively support and attend these offerings.

There are also numerous opportunities to volunteer within the branches. Whether serving as a branch chair, committee member or speaker at events, your

involvement can yield significant professional benefits and count towards CPD. Supporting your local branch is a two-way street – the more you engage, the more you gain.

Online events

For those who prefer online learning, the branch network provides a wealth of choices. These events range from technical updates to practice management and regulatory requirements, making them accessible either in real-time or as recorded sessions. Many options are free or low-cost.

I recently spoke with a training partner about their approach to webinars. They emphasised the importance of staff watching specified online updates together in a designated training room, followed by discussion. This approach maximises the benefits of webinars, ensuring that participants stay engaged.

Charlotte Barbour, CIOT President

Image

‘The Branch Network offers a great opportunity to meet with tax professionals in your locality, as well as providing vital CPD. The ability to discuss current tax issues and technical changes is valuable and gives reassurance that you are not alone! Volunteering for branch committees or offering to speak on your specialist subject is rewarding and raises your professional profile.’



Senga Prior, ATT President