Spotlight on the Agent Digital Design Advisory Group

Briefings

August 2026



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The Agent Digital Design Advisory Group (ADDAG) was created in 2019 to help bridge the gap between tax policy and implementation. For a policy to be effective, the systems and processes designed to implement it need to enable taxpayers and their agents to comply easily with their obligations.

The group looks at the development of digital services from the agents' perspective. We aim to get involved as early as possible to give ourselves the best chance of influencing the final outcome.

The ATT and CIOT are each represented by a member in practice and a technical officer. Since 2021, the group has been jointly chaired by representatives from HMRC and the professional bodies. The current professional body co-chair is ATT technical officer Helen Thornley. ADDAG reports to the overarching Representative Bodies Steering Group.

Current and recent projects

As ADDAG often becomes involved in projects at the early stage of development, many agenda items are sensitive and it is not always possible to discuss fully the projects we are working on with members.

Recent agenda items have included discussions of the following:

Multi-factor authentication (MFA): This has been a complex topic, with engagement taking place not only through ADDAG but also via the Digital Security Working Group and the Larger Professional Services Firms working group. Several members of ADDAG took part in the early stages of testing, and the group was instrumental in negotiating the current phased implementation plan.

Agent registration: While the policy and guidance work has been carried out by other teams, ADDAG members have commented on the design and operation of the new registration system, which went live on 18 May. ADDAG will also be engaging with HMRC in due course on what the transition will look like for existing agents, who already have an agent services account and do not need to register again.

Pain points: An ongoing area of ADDAG's work has been the development of what are described in HMRC's Transformation Roadmap as 'short-term tactical service improvements for agents', intended to remove some of the 'pain points' that agents encounter with existing digital services while new platforms are being developed (see tinyurl.com/5aa2e3e8).

Work is ongoing to develop services that will allow agents to remove clients from self-assessment digitally, improve the Income Record Viewer and submit information relevant to their client's PAYE codes online.

Inheritance tax digitalisation: HMRC has funding set aside to develop a new digital service for inheritance tax from April 2027. While detailed policy work is ongoing in a dedicated group, ADDAG hopes to become involved in wider discussions on the design of the service, including agent access and permissions, the functionality that future HMRC platforms could provide, and how best to ensure that agents' needs are met. Our aim is to ensure that work undertaken to accommodate agents can then be replicated across future digital services.

Helen Thornley *hthornley@att.org.uk*

Lindsay Scott *lscott@ciot.org.uk*