CIOT Vice President's page: A seat at the table

Welcomes

October 2026



23 September 2026

Hello, and welcome to the Vice President’s page. It was a privilege to be invited to join the Officers Team of my Institute and to be appointed at the AGM in June. I know how big the shoes are that I will endeavour to fill.

By the time you read this, I’ll have just returned from chairing the Autumn Residential Conference at Cambridge. The conference is not just a great way to stay up to date technically and be entertained and informed by an outstanding group of speakers, but a chance to network with old friends and make new acquaintances.

As you’d expect given the wide range of taxation covering individuals, estates and corporates, both in the UK and abroad, the agenda is comprehensive. The topics that particularly interest me focus on agent registration and professional standards. These two matters are inextricably connected.

We know that all governments have sought to root out the bad actors who provide tax advice. It is vital that as qualified professionals we ensure that we are up to date with law and practice, can demonstrate adherence to professional standards and ensure that those standards remain appropriate and relevant, especially in a fast-moving technological world.

Although this government has stepped back from proposals for fuller regulation of tax advisers, we still have to comply with rules relating to our registration. This is not without risk for the tax profession, as assurances given in Parliament and recorded in Hansard about how the legislation will operate do not form part of the law itself. Time will tell whether those assurances hold firm.

As with the regulation of professionals in any field, it is far easier to target those who are already playing within the rules. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if bodies such as HMRC far more aggressively targeted the many unqualified advisers who provide advice to the unwary, often via social media platforms? One lives in hope.

So, to return to the Autumn Conference. Our licence to practise depends on keeping our technical knowledge up to date, which is why the conference is so relevant. It is also why your support for the branch network and the technical updates it provides, alongside the CPD you source elsewhere, is so important.

Turning to my own Council journey, I joined in September 2017. Since then, I have seen the Institute undergo considerable changes. I believe that your Council has navigated the changes needed to fulfil our Royal Charter, and to do so in a way that demonstrates excellent governance and financial management, provides relevant training and examinations, and manages risk appropriately.

One of the reasons why Council is so effective is that its membership is not static. With that in mind, we will shortly start a round of recruitment to fill seats on Council. To apply you need to be a CTA and, if you are interested, look out for the adverts when they are posted on our social networks. We are also going to publish one or two ‘vox pop’ videos of current Council members explaining their journeys to Council and what it is really about.

As part of our recruitment process, we try to find candidates who will add diversity of thought, experience, expertise and perspectives to the work of Council. It is not about being a deep tax technician or someone with years of experience. The time commitment is manageable, and we want to ensure there are no barriers in the way

of the right candidates being appointed.

One thing I hope candidates can bring is a degree of passion for the Institute and its future. I care deeply about passing on knowledge and experience, which brings me back to our branch network. I love to see the enthusiasm and fresh perspectives that less senior members bring to the network and to other committees, such as the Future Tax Professionals group. These members are considering what the Institute needs to look like to remain relevant long beyond the time I have put my tax books away.

Experience at branch level can give so many valuable insights into the future direction and day-to-day oversight of the Institute. Who knows, early and active involvement with a branch could lead you to a seat around the Council table.