Spotlight on HMRCs Digitising Post Programme Forum

Briefings

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CIOT and ATT are helping to shape HMRCs move towards digital correspondence, with accessibility and the needs of taxpayers and agents central to discussions.

For many taxpayers, receiving correspondence from HMRC could increasingly become a digital rather than a paper experience. This shift forms part of a much wider transformation of the tax system, and HMRCs Digitising Post Programme Forum (DPPF) gives stakeholders an opportunity to contribute to the process as plans develop. The Forum was established against the backdrop of HMRCs Transformation Roadmap (published in July 2025) and itspolicy on Modernising HMRCs Outbound Communications (published in November 2025).

From post to digital

HMRC plans to move towards digital by default for outbound communications. Customers using relevant HMRC digital services will generally receive correspondence digitally once those services move to digital by default, unless they opt for paper. Paper communications will continue to be available for those who choose not to engage digitally or are digitally excluded.

Under the new approach, customers will be able to access correspondence in their digital tax accounts through HMRCs online services. They will be notified when new correspondence is available, rather than needing to rely on a paper letter arriving. To support these notifications, HMRC will collect more verified digital contact details, such as email addresses and mobile numbers, atdesignated points when customers interact with its digital services.

The transition will not happen acrossevery HMRC service at once. Thelegislation allows different services tomove to digital by default when they meet relevant readiness criteria, including having the necessary IT infrastructure in place. HMRC therefore describes the change as a gradual rollout.

The Transformation Roadmap

Digitising correspondence forms part of HMRCs Transformation Roadmap, which sets an ambition for HMRC to become a digital-first organisation, with at least 90% of its interactions taking place digitally by2029/30. Reducing reliance on paper is specifically identified within the roadmap, with HMRC expecting to save £50 million a year in print and postage costs from 2028/29 onwards. For agents, the wider transformation envisages better digital services, including secure three-way communications between HMRC, customers and their agents.

There is, however, an important distinction between digital first and digital only. The roadmap says that HMRC will retain targeted support for people who need it, including those who are digitally excluded or in vulnerable circumstances. The outbound communications policy similarly commits to retaining paper correspondence and ensuring that it remains accessible and meets the same standards of clarity as its digital equivalent.

The role of the Forum

The DPPF brings together representative bodies, customer organisations, accessibility representatives and other stakeholders to engage with HMRC as its plans develop. Accessibility and digital inclusion have been major themes of its discussions, which have considered not only the continued availability of paper, but also how support needs will be identified, how trusted helpers can assist customers securely, and how digital correspondence will be tested with people who have different accessibility needs.

For advisers and their clients, the practical questions include how agents will access relevant correspondence, how customers will know that a new letter is waiting, and how those who need paper will continue to receive it. These are important tests of whether the transition works in practice, rather than simply reducing reliance on post.

ATT (co-chair), CIOT and LITRG participate in the Forum, bringing the practical experience of tax advisers and their clients into discussions about digital correspondence and its interaction with agent services. This enables us to feed views into HMRC as the detail develops and implementation approaches.

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