

A message for Local Working Together Groups

Digital Support for Agents

This note sets out HMRC's plans for Local Working Together arrangements for the remainder of 2014/15 and beyond.

In line with the Government's 'Digital by Default' agenda, HMRC is looking at how it can provide greater choice and more flexible services to agents through increased use of digital channels which we started to explore in August this year with the test of a Digital VAT Forum.

Our aim here is to extend the reach of our engagement and support activities and their content, using digital channels which will allow more agents to engage with us.

Last year we took the decision to move to digital for our help and support to small business, this has resulted in a significant growth in SMEs taking advantage of what we have to offer digitally compared to when similar services were delivered face to face. Learning from this, we want to take a similar approach for our engagement with agents, improving the quality and consistency of message whilst ensuring we continue the two way conversations that Working Together so invaluable offers.

We want to take what is good about Working Together and look at how we replicate that digitally, at the same time we want to identify what really needs to be undertaken by face to face meetings and look at what other ways we can engage with agents in the future. This is an ongoing conversation, HMRC want to hear from Local Working Together agents to understand what digital services could be provided to improve engagement.

This engagement started with us taking your views at the Working Together meetings, thank you for sending your thoughts and suggestions to Gill Harmon. We are still working through the detail and will take these into consideration as we move forward.

The latest round of Working Together meetings have now taken place for this year. From late February to late March we would like to replace the regular WT meetings with a series of Regional workshops, we will use these workshops to hear from agents about what works Face to Face and what additional engagement could take place digitally.

Our co-ordinators will be helping to arrange and facilitate workshops in your regions, if you would like to participate we will let you know how you can register your interest nearer the time.

Due to a BC&S Relocation Strategy you may be aware of some personnel changes within our Working Together Co-ordinator Team. Although we anticipate further changes as people move to new posts our future plans for Working Together and our ongoing consultation will not be affected. Where such changes impact on groups the Working Together Co-ordinator will inform you personally.

On a final note we would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your continued commitment to Working Together. As we move forward to more digital agent services and channels your ongoing support will be crucial to our success.