

## Virtual Communications Group Digital Services Update October 2020

### Making Tax Digital

- There are over 1.4m businesses signed up to MTD as of 28 September and over 7 million VAT returns have been successfully submitted through the service. Over, 85% of all businesses mandated to join from April 2019 are now signed up to the MTD service. The proportion of non-mandated businesses who have signed up voluntarily is currently well over 31%.
- HMRC has published a further two MTD cases studies on gov.uk, including an accounting firm in Plymouth and a hardware shop in Bristol. These case studies will also be promoted through the HMRC social media channels on a weekly basis.
- There are a further 2 Income Tax Self-Assessment (ITSA) webinars scheduled in October. These webinars provide businesses with an overview and up to date information about the Making Tax Digital for ITSA pilot. To date HMRC have reached over 4,000 businesses.

### Trust Registration Service

The Trust Registration micro service is fully functional. You should use it now to; register, update details, declare “no change”, or close all types of Trusts and Estates.

You can access the micro service on GOV.UK using the following links:

For Trusts:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-a-trust-as-a-trustee>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-your-clients-trust>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-your-trusts-registration-service>

For Estates

- <https://www.gov.uk/self-assessment-tax-returns/returns-for-someone-who-has-died>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-your-clients-estate>

These links will take you to the relevant landing page. To launch the micro service, select the green "start now" button.

### The iForm has now been decommissioned:

The original service (iForm) hasn't been available since 23 September 2020 and it is no longer possible to use this service.

## User Research

TRS will be extended to include functionality to register Non-Taxable Trusts. This part of the service is currently in the development phase.

To help HMRC in developing this aspect of the service, we are looking to speak to people who have set up a trust or are a trustee for a Trust that is not liable to pay tax.

Do you or anyone you know have a Trust that falls into this category?

We would also like to hear from you if you are an agent who will be registering a trust that is not liable for tax, on behalf of a client.

If so and you are interested in participating in user research, now or in the future, please contact – [serviceteam17.digital\\_ddcn@digital.hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:serviceteam17.digital_ddcn@digital.hmrc.gov.uk)

## Digital Communication Services (DCS) – Agent Forum (September 20) Update for VCG

### Agent Forum (AF)

As at the end of September 2020 the Forum had **1105** registered subscribers including Professional Bodies, of **1229** users signed up to its predecessor forum.

We are separately inviting various customer groups with Capital Gains payment liabilities or Trust registration responsibilities to HMRC; the Law Society and Society for Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEPS) amongst them.

Even though registrations have not reached the levels of its former platform, participation and issues traffic are increasing. We are also stepping up our recruitment of internal HMRC users.

Thus far during 20/21 we have dealt with **251** widespread issues, across all Heads of Duty. The new 'Knowledge Base' feature is also increasingly popular and carries announcements and real time taxes information. We continue to support agents and their clients through the COVID-19 crisis and have a live dedicated panel to deal with related issues and publish guidance for all associated schemes including the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS), Job Retention Scheme (JRS) and Eat Out to Help Out scheme. We will be having two new boards, one for UK transition and one for Self-Assessment.

We have in conjunction with our Issues Overview Group (IOG) stakeholder colleagues, put in place procedures to identify high priority widespread issues to be taken forward for resolution with our internal technical specialist and communications partners. This is being monitored by the Agent Forum team and others.

We continue building our internal HMRC Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) capability, formalising recruitment from across HMRC to improve the quality and timeliness of issue resolution responses and to focus on Agent Forum operations. Performance metrics thus far for 20/21 include over **18000k** forum views, over **20000** knowledge base views and **220** resolved topics since April 2020, which are all moderated daily with appropriate responses given, as determined by subject matter, related traffic generated, and referrals provided by line of business. We have reviewed our performance metrics to more effectively manage our live 'aged cases' portfolio, given we better understand new functionality provided by the MS Dynamics platform.

The Digital Customer Support Services (DCSS) Agent Team is staffed by a Service Manager and 2.5 FTE Moderators, who moderate and run the forum.