

Spring 2013/Edition 1

sheards

Chartered Accountants & Business Advisors



SMILE

THE SUMMER IS UPON US

SUNSHINE & SHOWERS
A Recap of the Budget

Hear it here first...
**Our new Landlord
Tax Service**

**Connection 13....
you're invited!**

Welcome



What a busy few months it's been; the Coalition Budget, the launch of major reforms to the PAYE system and the passing of our first and only female prime minister. In this issue we'll cover the main points from the Budget and more importantly, how they affect you as a local business.

If you're still eager for more information, join us for our Connection 13 Seminar. Ask your questions directly to

our expert panel, hear about the latest financial and legal issues and enjoy a lunch with other local businesses and professionals. See right for more information.

Kevin Winterburn & Carolyn Atkinson, Directors

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It's good to talk

We believe that frequent contact with our clients fosters healthy relationships, and through open dialogue we make sure that our clients receive the utmost benefit from choosing Sheards. So whilst you're most welcome to call us anytime with any queries you have (that's what we're here for), at Sheards we like to take the proactive step of maintaining contact with all our clients in many ways. This newsletter, which we hope you'll enjoy and find of use, is just one of those ways.

In addition, we also run an active twitter feed; follow us @SheardsAccts to keep up to date with our news and opinions. Even if you're new to twitter, give it a go – although you may find it a little addictive! Our website also features business news and hot topics – log on to www.sheards.co.uk or scan our QR code to take you there directly on your mobile.



Finally, as part of our ongoing commitment to business in our region, we regularly host seminars to give current and topical business advice. You don't have to be a client to get involved. These events could help make running your business just that little bit easier – see your invitation on the page opposite.

Smile and enjoy the summer chat with Sheards.



YOU'RE INVITED!

A must attend seminar programme designed to help local business.

Join the Sheards Connection 13 Seminar Programme where we'll provide easy to understand updates on issues that affect you as a local business owner. Right now, we're talking about RTI, the implications of the Budget and auto-enrolment.

We also have guest presenters who provide those attending with useful information on cloud computing, employment law updates and marketing.

Lunch will be provided in an informal setting where you can network with other business leaders from across our region.

All for just £10. £2 of this fee will be donated to Forget Me Not Childrens Hospice, a fantastic Huddersfield charity.

Places are filling up fast. Call now to book at one of our upcoming seminars:

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- THURSDAY 4 JULY
- THURSDAY 12 SEPTEMBER
- THURSDAY 24 OCTOBER
- THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER

Tel: 01484 541 155
or email: advice@sheards.co.uk



National minimum wage set to rise

The government has announced that in October the National Minimum Wage will rise by 12p to £6.31 per hour for adults. Recommendations were made by the independent Low Pay Commission which have been accepted by Vince Cable.

Although many employers support the concept of the minimum wage, for many businesses already feeling the squeeze, this news will come as an extra blow, especially for small businesses.

The government has also announced there will be a stronger set of measures put in place to enforce the minimum wage. If you are concerned about how the changes to National Minimum Wage may affect you, get in touch with us on 01484 541 155 or email advice@sheards.co.uk for advice.

In detail, the rises are as follows:

- Adult rate to increase to £6.31 an hour (+12p)
- 18-20 year olds rate to increase to £5.03 an hour (+5p)
- 16-17 year old rate to increase to £3.72 an hour (+4p)
- Apprentice rate to increase to £2.68 an hour (+3p)



With a glittering display of celebrities, entrepreneurs and business leaders attending Margaret Thatcher's funeral, there has been comment in the press that the Coalition 'must maintain Thatcher's pro-business spirit'. Whether you're pro Thatcher or not, the timing of her passing gave us chance to reflect on the legacy left by such a controversial era and how it affects business today.

Whilst access to suitable funding remains challenging, the ongoing developments of the Euro-Zone crisis and the continuing talk of recession at home, UK enterprises already feeling the pinch may have been hoping for more immediate help. As long established local advisors, we have vast experience of guiding both new and established businesses through immediate economic challenges whilst planning for the long term. Book an appointment today.

On page 8 we look at the changes now in place to PAYE and on page 10 we cover the new 'auto-enrolment scheme'.

What do the proposals set by the Coalition actually mean to those running SME's today?

- The cut in Corporation Tax is good news for businesses with profits over £300,000.
- Businesses are set to benefit from a new Employment Allowance, cutting Employers' National Insurance Contribution by up to £2,000 from next April and exempting an estimated 450,000 small businesses from paying any national insurance contributions.
- The much-anticipated increase in the income tax personal allowance, which will see the threshold reaching the Coalition's £10,000 target in 2014, a year earlier than originally planned.
- An annual £3bn boost for UK infrastructure from 2015.
- Support for homebuyers through the extension of shared equity schemes, offering loans of up to 20% to buyers of new build homes.

The end of year-end PAYE

In April, major reforms of the PAYE system were put in place. Real Time Information is a new system that employers must use in order to report PAYE information to HMRC in real time. This means that employers must use payroll software in order to send details every time they pay an employee as and when the payments are made.

The aim of RTI is to improve the payroll system and create more up to date records of employees earnings.

Some smaller employers may find the prospect of this daunting. Whilst HMRC has granted concessions to smaller employers that have weekly staff, it intends to have all employers fully using this system by October 2013, and those that don't may be fined.



More than 70,000 returns have been submitted since the system launched on 6th April. Contact our Payroll team for help and guidance on RTI.

A FRIENDLY BUNCH

This page is dedicated to our people. Each member of the Sheards' team plays a key role in the overall success of our business. We introduce to you Mark Stewart, Sophie Hill and Jenny Aston.

Meet the people who make us the friendly face of accountancy...



Mark Stewart

DIRECTOR OF SHEARDS WEALTH MANAGEMENT

I am responsible to the board for the overall performance of Sheards Wealth Management. The part of my role I particularly enjoy is meeting new clients and consulting with individual and corporate clients on a daily basis. I enjoy a healthy lifestyle and enjoy boxing. I hope to complete the Manchester 10k this summer in under 50 minutes. Watch this space! My claim to fame is that I was in a "Gillette" commercial in the late eighties.



Sophie Hill

TRAINEE ACCOUNTANT

As a Trainee Accountant I'm really enjoying my time at Sheards learning new things every day. At the moment I'm being trained on how to complete accounts for small businesses, alongside book keeping and completing VAT returns for a variety of clients. In my spare time I enjoy being with friends and family. I'm also planning a shopping spree to spend my winnings from the Grand National.



Jenny Aston

ACCOUNTS MANAGER

As Accounts Manager I am responsible for preparing accounts for a variety of small and medium sized businesses, along with preparing accounts for charity clients. In addition, I provide support to our new members of staff. When I'm not at work I love to eat out and also enjoy swimming. I'm smiling right now because I've recently passed my ACCA – no more revising for me.

LOCAL BUSINESS FEATURE

HOWARTHS THE EMPLOYMENT LAW SPECIALIST



Howarths The Employment Law Specialist has been a client since 2012. During this time our relationship has grown from strength to strength. Initially, we provided the team at Howarths with support on their day to day accounting processes. We've now become an instrumental part of their team and provide assistance in budget setting and analysis of the performance of their business. Here is what their Accounts Co-ordinator had to say about us.



"Having qualified from University with an Accounts Degree, I started a new career at Howarths as Accounts Co-ordinator. I had limited experience of working within a firm and required hands on practical training on Sage. Sheards came into the office to train me on all I needed to know to get up and running."

"This had a substantial impact for both me and Howarths. Sheards were able to answer all my questions and queries without hesitation. Their method of teaching allowed me to gain greater knowledge and understanding of the system. On a day to day basis the team are always on hand to help. Thank you very much for all your help and support"

Sana Mahmood, Accounts Co-ordinator

FAQ's

The big changes to payroll last month have caused an influx of questions from local businesses. Here are a few that caught our eye, our Payroll Team would be happy to chat through any specific concerns you have too.

I'm experiencing problems using HMRC's Basic PAYE tools. Can you help?

We're aware that in some cases the HMRC Basic PAYE Tools software is displaying an error message when submitting RTI. A pre-recorded message on HMRC's helpline states: "We're aware of an issue for some employers trying to submit their RTI returns using HMRC's Basic PAYE tools. We are investigating this issue..."

You should pay employees as normal even if you encounter problems with their payroll and can't submit PAYE until after they have been paid. Remember you can call Sheards, who can handle the whole process for you now and moving forward, to help lighten your load.

I am not very computer literate and I don't really know where to begin. Do I have to buy software to do RTI?

If you intend to manage your payroll yourself, then yes, you will need to either purchase suitable software or update your current software if your existing service isn't set up for RTI. Alternatively, you can use Sheards to manage the process for you. Call our Payroll Team on 01484 541 155 for a quote.

I'm not sure what details I will need of my employees in order to set up RTI.

HMRC will require you to have complete and accurate information of all your employees. The essential information required is; full name, date of birth and National Insurance number. Even if you already hold this information it's a good idea to double check all the details are correct.

I have always paid my employees weekly. Am I exempt from RTI?

If you have less than 50 employees HMRC has agreed a temporary relaxation of the reporting arrangements until 5 October 2013. In the meantime you can send information by the date of your regular payroll as long as it isn't later than the end of the tax month. We'd be happy to have a no obligation chat with you. Call our Payroll Team on Call 01484 541155 or email advice@sheards.co.uk.



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Landlord Tax Services

Tax Advice for Property Investors

LANDLORD TAX SERVICES

As an investor in the local property market, you'll be keen to ensure that the services you use, are helping to yield the best returns on your property portfolio. Sheards Property Services are designed to do just that. Whether you are a seasoned property investor, or just finding your feet, we can help you with a whole range of tax related services, specifically for landlords, investors and developers.

Sheards can take away the burden of completing annual accounts and tax returns, allowing you to concentrate on managing your portfolio. We know exactly what expenses can be claimed and what proof we'll need to support your tax return - all for a highly competitive and transparent price, starting at just £150 plus VAT. Our services include:

- Completion of annual accounts and tax return.
- Calculation of your tax position.
- Management of all correspondence and communication with HM Revenue & Customs.
- Specialist advisors on hand to answer all your tax related queries throughout the year.
- Focusing on reducing the amount of tax you pay.

Talk to the experts!

Tim Musgrove, Tax and Payroll Manager, is an expert in all things tax. His speciality is Tax Returns and he loves getting his teeth into complex tax queries and helping his clients understand what they mean in simple terms.

NEW



SHEARDS WEALTH MANAGEMENT PENSIONS FOR ALL

In October 2012, the government introduced a new law to improve the living standards of millions of people when they retire.

Auto-enrolment is a way of making sure all eligible employees automatically become members of a pension scheme, meaning they won't be fully reliant on their state pension when retirement comes.

It is important for all employers to understand the role they play in auto-enrolment and to ensure your company's approach to pensions meets the new legislation.

At Sheards we have a new team dedicated to helping businesses understand what their obligations are.



Meet the team

Our new additions to our wealth management team

James Glasheen
Independent Financial Adviser

James has worked in financial services for over 25 years, helping personal and corporate clients identify clearly what their goals and objectives are and how they can reach them.

Specialising in investments and inheritance tax planning, James is somewhat of an industry guru, having worked on both sides of the fence for a number of large banks and national IFA practices.

Clive Berry
Employee Benefit Consultant

Clive can be found visiting small to medium sized enterprises throughout the region, helping them get to grips on the pitfalls and opportunities of the new auto-enrolment scheme.

He is a pensions expert and works with the team to ensure that our clients' company pension schemes meet all the new requirements.

A brief look at your 10 key employer duties:

- 1. Employer responsibility:** To ensure eligible employees are enrolled into a 'qualifying' pension scheme.
- 2. Waiting period:** Employers with a waiting period (up to 3 months) have to notify each jobholder when automatic enrolment will occur and must be done by the time their employment begins.
- 3. Employer contribution:** Ability to contribute to employees' qualifying pension schemes. Amount depends on type of pension arrangement and its rules.
- 4. Opt-out:** Jobholders have a right to opt-out and Trustees and managers of pension schemes must be notified.
- 5. Registration with the Pension Regulator:** You have 4 months following auto-enrolment to register, providing the Pensions Regulator details of how you have complied with your duties. Re-registration required every 3 years.

6. Opt-in: Jobholders who aren't members of a qualifying pension scheme will be entitled to opt-in to a qualifying scheme. You must then facilitate this and pay contributions.

7. Low earners: Those who don't qualify because of low earnings will be entitled to join a pension scheme by giving joining notice. As an employer, you will have to facilitate this.

8. Auto re-enrol: You must automatically re-enrol any employees who are not already members of their qualifying pension scheme.

9. Providing information: As an employer you must support the whole process by providing information as required by regulations.

10. Record keeping: Full records of the automatic enrolment process are required for at least 6 years.

Does this sound like a lot of information to digest? Our dedicated team will be delighted to support you through this process. Call 01484 448 019 or email fs@sheards.co.uk



Spicing it up for charity

In March we held a Curry Night for Kirkwood Hospice. Wow, it was a huge success.

Almost 120 tickets were sold to clients, contacts and friends of the firm. Everyone enjoyed an evening of informal chat, together with superb Indian food provided by our hosts, the Chilli Lounge in Huddersfield.

Together we raised £1,200 for the Kirkwood Hospice Capital Appeal, bringing our total fundraising in the last 12 months to over £4,000.



Kirkwood
The Hospice for Kirklees

Thank you again to everyone who supported us to help raise money for such an important charity in the Kirklees area. Watch this space for upcoming events – we hope you'll get involved.



Contact us

Make your appointment today, to see how we can help.

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