

# JTC NEWSLINE

Issue 180

December 2023

A short newsletter this month but, even though it's Christmas, there are still a couple of deadlines to bear in mind.

## Deadline 6th January

The [changes to NICs](#) announced in the autumn Statement come into force on 6th January. Now would be a good time to check that your payroll department/software is up to speed ready for the changes. ■

## Deadline 31st January

Do I need to remind you that 31st January is the deadline for your 2022-23 Self Assessment returns? (It's also easy to forget that 31st January is also the deadline to correct any provisional figures from 2021-22 returns that need to be amended.)

If you do your own return, make sure you check **\*now\*** that you can get onto the HMRC website in case you have to reset passwords etc: you really don't want to be trying to do that at three minutes to midnight on 31st. If you use an accountant to do your return, make sure you know the absolute deadline by which they need to have your records so that they can get the return done on time for you. Don't be the person who turns up on the last day with a carrier bag full of receipts! ■

## Helplines

While you are completing your return you might reasonably expect to be able to get help from the HMRC helpline. This year, though, they tell us that the "simplest" queries will be referred to online services instead. [The announcement](#) says: "Customers calling with queries that can be quickly and easily resolved online will be directed to HMRC's

online services from 11th December until the SA deadline on 31st January." Apparently over a million of the annual five million calls to the helpline come in during the last thirty days of January.

In particular, don't ring them up to find out

- Do I need to fill in a tax return?
- How do I fill in my online tax return?
- How do I check how much tax I owe?
- Where's my Self Assessment tax refund?
- What happens if I can't pay my tax bill?

The answers to these five questions [are all here](#) in an HMRC press release, which also has suggestions of other online help you should check before going to the telephone helpline. ■

## Making Tax Digital and the missing £2 billion

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), the parliamentary committee in charge of [examining "the value for money of Government projects, programmes and service delivery"](#), has issued a [devastating report](#) into Making Tax Digital (MTD). They are scathing about HMRC's ability to deliver the extension of MTD from VAT to Income Tax and, amongst other criticisms, find that "HMRC excluded a total of over £2bn in upfront transitional costs for customers from its 2022 and '23 business cases for MTD".

In other words, while MTD will make life easier for HMRC, the assertion that it will be cheaper and easier for taxpayers seems to have missed a couple of £billion of costs that taxpayers will, across the piece, incur to set ourselves up for it. The PAC clearly have long memories: Making Tax Digital was first announced in 2015 in a paper called ["Making Tax Easier"](#). The PAC report on its progress is called "Making Tax Difficult"! ■

## A tax case warning

In a recent tax case, a small company paid three subcontractors gross when they should have been paid net. It was not established fully how the mistake happened, but the directors relied on an experienced office manager and did not check on her work, and she had since left the company.

The tribunal found that “the directors felt they could rely on a long standing employee [to do the CIS checks]. However, given the significant impact that failure to comply with the regulations would have on the company, we do not think that sufficient reasonable care was taken to ensure that the regulations were complied with” and “we do not consider that the Appellant has demonstrated any special circumstances that warrant the reduction of the penalty.”

The lesson to take away from this is that you need to have a system in place, one that doesn't rely on a single employee, and you need both to document it and then to check regularly that it actually works as intended.

If you are masochistic enough to want to read the tax case as an **Awful Warning**, you can find it [here](#). ■

## Advisory fuel rates from 1st December 2023

The latest update applies from 1st December 2023. These rates only apply to employees using a company car.

You can use the rates when you either:

- reimburse employees for business travel in their company cars
- need employees to repay the cost of fuel used for private travel

Hybrid cars are treated as either petrol or diesel cars for advisory fuel rates.

You can use the previous rates for up to 1 month from the date the new rates apply.

The details can be read [here](#). The new rates per mile are listed below. ■

Engine size	Petrol	Diesel	LPG	Electric* <small>*Fully electric cars only</small>
<b>1,400cc or less</b>	14p		10p	9p
<b>1,600cc or less</b>		13p		9p
<b>1,401cc - 2,000cc</b>	16p		12p	9p
<b>1,601cc - 2,000cc</b>		15p		9p
<b>Over 2,000cc</b>	26p	20p	18p	9p

If you have any feedback or queries relating to any of the items in Newsline  
email: [wendy.bradley.42@gmail.com](mailto:wendy.bradley.42@gmail.com)

