A quarterly newsletter
from CBSL Accountants | **Autumn 2026**

www.cbslgroup.com
01743 249 992
enquiries@cbslgroup.com

cbsl. accountants

the number

Welcome to the Autumn 2026 edition of our Newsletter.

Inside this edition

1. Welcome
2. Key Autumn Budget points
3. Why I turned down the Budget Breakfast
4. Annual drinks – photos
5. Why we write our own



In the past month the build up to budget announcements and speculation has often felt overwhelming and the resulting tinkering with tax makes it hard to spot what genuinely affects your day-to-day finances.

We set out the key points below and Adrian details his thoughts on the post-Budget seminar. As always, we're at the end of the phone if you want to discuss anything Budget-related, please just get in touch.

In this edition we share photos of our annual drinks event at the end of September, where it was great to see so many of you and enjoy the hospitality and historic charm of Henry Tudor Inn.

As part of Adrian's ongoing blog series, we include a recent article , 'Why we write our own', which is also on his LinkedIn page and our website.

We hope you find this an interesting and enjoyable read.

Best wishes,
Louise Osselton Director

The key Autumn Budget points for individuals and businesses

- **Income Tax and National Insurance –** Personal tax allowances and National Insurance thresholds remain frozen until April 2031.
- **Tax Rates –** No changes to the main rates of Income Tax or National Insurance on employment income. No changes to Dividend Tax rates.
- **Savings and Property Income –** Income Tax rates on savings and property income will increase from April 2027, with rates rising to 24%, 44% and 49%.
- **Business Mileage –** The increased rate of 55p per mile for the first 10,000 business miles has been made permanent. The rate for mileage above 10,000 miles will increase to 35p per mile from April 2027.
- **Capital Gains Tax –** No changes to the main Capital Gains Tax rates. However, the Business Asset Disposal Relief lifetime limit will reduce to £500,000 from 6 April 2027.
- **VAT on Electricity –** Temporary 0% VAT rate on domestic electricity extended to July 2027.
- **ISAs –** The planned reduction in the annual Cash ISA allowance has been scrapped, meaning the allowance will remain at £20,000.
- **National Minimum Wage and State Pension –** Both will increase by 3.9% from April 2027.
- **Trading allowance –** The tax free trading allowance will increase from £1,000 to £3,000 from April 2027.

Why I turned down the budget breakfast *by* Adrian Barker

I was asked recently whether I'd like to present on the budget. The idea was the familiar one: John Healey sits down on Wednesday 28 October, and the following morning a room of business owners gets a run-through of what he said, with coffee, slides and a few questions at the end. I said no.

Not because I've nothing to say about budgets (anyone who has sat in a meeting with me knows otherwise) but because I stopped believing in that format the best part of twenty years ago, and nothing since has changed my mind.

The budget-day seminar is what local accountancy firms used to do, and plenty still do. Get the clients in, hand round the Treasury's summary with your own logo on the front, tell them what the chancellor said. It made sense once. Before the internet, if you wanted to know by Thursday morning what had happened to capital allowances, your accountant was a reasonable place to find out.

That world has gone. The mainstream media now cover the budget quickly and, on the whole, very well. By the time the chancellor is back in Downing Street there are live blogs, calculators, a dozen explainers and a columnist or two telling you what it means for your pension. The Times, the FT and the BBC have more people on it than any firm in Shropshire could field, and they've been at it since lunchtime.

Then there's the leaking. It used to be a resigning matter. In 1947 Hugh Dalton mentioned a handful of his measures to a journalist on his way into the chamber. They were in the Star's late edition before he'd finished speaking, and he had resigned by the following day. Compare that with now, when ministers keen to show how close they are to the action brief the papers for a fortnight beforehand, and the Speaker is left complaining from the chair that he read most of it over breakfast. By budget day the surprises are few, and the ones that remain are reported in detail within the hour. There isn't much left for a seminar to reveal.

Jessica Cook, a financial planner writing in The Times on 15 October, put it better than I would have. Her headline called the speech theatre, and her argument was that the arithmetic the Office for Budget Responsibility publishes the moment the chancellor sits down matters far more than anything he says standing up. Where the headroom comes from, real money from a tax rise or a spending cut, or a growth forecast nudged in the right direction, is what the gilt market will be reading while the rest of us wait for the sketch writers.

She also had a line for anyone tempted to act on a rumour, and it's the most useful sentence I've read about this budget. Before you do anything, "ask whether you could undo that action in December". Taking tax-free cash out of a pension, crystallising a gain, making the gift that starts the seven-year clock: these are one-way doors. Her figure for pension lump sums was stark. Withdrawals roughly doubled in two years, much of it by people who'd read that the allowance was about to be cut. Whatever this budget does to it, the money that's already out can't go back in.

I know this format from the inside. When I was a partner in a national firm we ran a budget breakfast every year, and I remember them with some affection, many coming together to talk about farming amongst themselves over free coffee and a bacon sandwich.

My colleague who presented knew his tax inside out, and to be fair to him he was good. But I'm not convinced it was his view on agricultural property relief that got them out of the Land Rover at eight in the morning. It was the bacon.

Which is fine, as far as it goes. People came, there was a chat, a few cards changed hands. But be honest about what it was: a marketing event with a budget attached. Nobody in that room learned anything they couldn't have read on the way home, and nobody's position was improved by a slide.

So, I left the local firms to their presentations. If the bacon sandwiches were good, I hope you went. I wasn't on the stage, and CBSL Accountants didn't hire a room.

What I did instead was less visible and, I think, worth a great deal more. On the morning of 29 October our clients didn't need me to tell them what the chancellor said.

They'll have read it. What they'll have wanted to know was what it meant for the business they run and the plans they've already made with us: the sale that's part-way through, the shares that were going to the next generation this year, the pension contribution pencilled in for March. Those questions are specific. So are the answers. Neither suits a room of sixty people and a laser pointer.

Some of those conversations were short. Most budgets leave most people where they were. A few will matter a great deal, and those are the ones where knowing a client's affairs beats knowing the budget. You can't get that from a slide, and you can't get it from a firm that met you for the first time over a croissant.

So that's where we were: at the end of the phone, or across the table, working through the detail for the people who pay us to know their business, rather than playing to a room.

It isn't a show. It isn't meant to be. The budget has enough theatre in it already.

Adrian Barker, Managing Director

Our Annual Drinks *at* Henry Tudor Inn, Shrewsbury

On Thursday 24th September 2026, we held our annual drinks event at Henry Tudor Inn, Shrewsbury – a great evening in a beautiful historic venue. It was lovely to catch up with clients and acquaintances.



Louise Osselton, Vic Edwards and Melanie Chandler



Callum Watkins and Jason Martin



Juliet Edwards, Nuala Wigens and Nathasha Perera









Paul McLoughlin and Samuel Jones



Bryony Davenport, Lucy Grocott and James Philipson



Lindsay Pearson and David Hall





Mike Williams, Zoe Dimmock and Lee Dimmock



Neil Dingley, Jenny Beaumont Clare Heighway-Jones and Pete White



Deborah Simmons, Michael Cruise and Steve Simmons



Why we write our own *by* Adrian Barker

In October I was in Madrid, expecting sunshine. What I actually got was the wettest few days the city had seen for many months, which was all very frustrating. But it was lovely, and I had left Fruit Attraction, the trade show I was there for, and was having a quick stroll before lunch when I had a phone call from John Cremer. That was lovely too.

John is an improviser. In the summer he ran a morning for CBSL Onyx, our peer group for business owners and directors. He had the tables taken out of the room and sixteen company directors on their feet within minutes, and I wrote about it afterwards. He had read it, and very kindly asked if he could talk to me about how I write. He was quite surprised at how I had written it, which was very flattering from a man who can stand in a room of strangers, talk and improvise. I would love to have his skill.

The answer I gave him is not complicated. I write about things I have actually seen, not things I have read about. I write in the voice I would use if you were sat across the table from me, including the bits where I am not sure. I look for the one moment in the room that nobody else clocked, because that is usually where the story is. And I read the writing of people who are far better than me and borrow whatever I can carry. They are usually not business writers. Jeremy Clarkson, A. A. Gill and the restaurateur Jeremy King are three of them.

It turns out that what John taught us that morning applies to writing as well. Listen properly. Say "yes, and" before you say "yes, but". Then commit and see it through. The longer version of all this is on LinkedIn, under the title "The teacher who found my writing annoyingly elementary".

None of it can be done with somebody else's article. At CBSL Accountants we always produce our own content for this newsletter. That is a choice. There are organisations that supply accountancy firms with ready-made articles. We believe it is more important to say what we think, and to give you our own opinions, than to copy someone else's and put our name at the top. It can be quite difficult to do, and this edition is a good example of why.

Take the budget. We talked about whether to include an article on it. But the chancellor delivered it on Wednesday 28 October, and by the time this reaches you it will likely be more than a month old. Who wants to read about the budget that long after the event? There is another reason. We try to deal with tax changes one to one, not in a generic way. What a budget means to you depends on the business you run and the plans you have already made, and that is a conversation, not an article. It is the same reason we do not hold a budget breakfast seminar.

Then there was Rice Krispies. At the start of November, it emerged that Kellogg's had changed the recipe, and that the rice in a Rice Krispie is now rice flour. I have written before about value engineering, where the recipe changes and the ticket does not, so I wrote about this too. When I wrote the first draft the story was only just reaching the national newspapers, so there was some merit in my writing it. By the time this newsletter was ready to publish, pretty much everyone already knew. The article was more than two thousand words long and, by then, three weeks old. I had missed the boat.

That is the price of writing your own material. A topical piece has a shelf life, and now and again one of ours goes past it.

So, this time I am writing about writing instead, and about why we do it. What matters to me is that this newsletter is about our business and why we do what we do. I think that is a key thing for any business owner. You have the passion that made you set the business up when you did. Your thoughts, your views, your values and your aspirations are all things to try to get across when you write about your company and what it does. They are yours, and they cannot be bought in.

So, two things.

First, we ask in every newsletter whether there is anything you would like to hear about, and we mean it. Please do let us know.

Second, we are thinking of producing two versions of the newsletter in future: one for our clients and one for everybody else. We hope that most, if not all, of our clients already know about the services we provide for them. So, the client version will cover some of the less mainstream things we can do, corporate finance and strategic planning among them, as well as the topical items we have always tried to write. The other version will say rather more about our services and how we deliver them, with a bit about our team and our values.

Whichever one reaches you, it will be our own, and it will say what we think. With luck, it will also be on time… and any delay has been solely down to my pulling the Rice Krispies article.

Carl, who put together the newsletter for us, has, as far as I am aware, neither Snapped nor Popped.

www.cbslgroup.com
01743 249 992
enquiries@cbslgroup.com

cbsl. accountants

Look out for our latest **updates for business** on our regular emails and blog posts. If you haven't already signed up for them, please let us know and we'll make sure you get them.

design & production by **www.brandedbyjones.com**