



NEWSLETTER

December 2017 – Volume 15, Issue 4

Welcome to the Copson Grandfield Pre-Christmas News Bulletin

30-31 St James Place
Mangotsfield
Bristol BS16 9JB

Tel 1: 0117 9561067

Fax 1: 0117 9701809

admin@copsongrandfield.co.uk
www.copsongrandfield.co.uk

Don't forget, Copson
Grandfield are on [Facebook](#)
& [Twitter!](#)



Please follow the links above,
or from our website, don't
forget to hit the 'Like' button!

Autumn Budget 2017: Stamp Duty Land Tax relief for first-time buyers



After months of speculation, the Autumn Budget (delivered on 22 November 2017) was seen by many as a bit of a 'non-event'.

However, Chancellor Philip Hammond did give *some* first-time home buyers an early Christmas present, in the form of Stamp Duty Tax Relief.

Those who qualify will pay zero Stamp Duty on the first £300,000 of any home that costs up to £500,000 with immediate effect. This means that on a home worth less than £300,000, you'll pay no stamp duty.

The new rates for qualifying first-time buyers are as follows:

- **Up to £300,000 purchase price:** 0% stamp duty
- **£300,001 - £500,000:** 5% (on that portion of the purchase price only)

The Treasury estimates that this move will take 80% of first-time buyers out of paying stamp duty altogether. However, there are a number of qualifying conditions that need to be met, for example:

If you're buying to let, even if this is your first purchase, you will not be eligible for the discounted rates. The property needs to be used as your main residence.

Also, if you're a first-time buyer, but jointly purchasing a home with a 'non first-time buyer', you will not qualify. You **both** need to be first time buyers to take advantage of the favourable rates.

Please also note that if you buy a home costing more than £500,000, you will not benefit from the new rates either, and will need to pay under the standard system instead.

Continued on Page 2...

Inside

Autumn Budget: SDLT 1
for First Time Buyers

Staff News 2

Office Opening Hours 2

Self-Assessment 2
Deadline

Other Budget News 2

EIS & VCT Investments 2

Christmas is a Joke 2



Finally; these changes only apply to purchases in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, there are no changes for buyers in Scotland.

Staff News

We would like to welcome **Angela Milne** to the Accounts Department as our new Portfolio Manager.

Angela will be taking over Frank's former portfolio and will be on hand to assist you going forward with your Accounting needs and queries.

Nikisha Mathew has also joined our Personal Tax Team, just in time for the January rush!

Finally, **Laura Woods** will be leaving our Accounts Team shortly in order to continue her career elsewhere, we're sorry to see her go, but wish her all the best in her new endeavors.

Other Budget News

Whilst many of the Budget rumours proved to be just that, there are still a few key points note:

National Living Wage

The National Living Wage is set to rise by 4.4% to £7.83 per hour from April 2018. The National Living Wage is currently £7.50.

Small Businesses

The Chancellor stated that he recognises that small businesses are currently under great pressure; consequently, he has decided not to reduce the VAT registration threshold, which remains at £85,000.

Income Tax

The tax-free Personal Allowance will increase from £11,500 to £11,850 from April next year. Meanwhile, the Higher Rate threshold (excluding Personal Allowance) will rise to £34,500, up from £33,500 (2017/18).

The starting rate for Savings Income (0%) will remain at £5000 for those who qualify, whilst the Personal Savings Allowance will remain at £1000 for Basic Rate Taxpayers and £500 for those who are in the Higher Rate tax bracket. The Allowance does not apply to Additional Rate Taxpayers.

As previously announced, the first £2000 of Dividend Income will be taxed at 0% from April 2018, compared to £5000 the year before (2017/18).

Pensions

Finally, despite earlier suggestions that this threshold would reduce, the Annual Allowance (maximum pension contributions) will remain at £40,000 for 2018/19.

EIS & VCT Investments

Enterprise Investment Schemes (EIS) & Venture Capital Trusts (VCTs) also received a boost in the recent Budget, with the annual investment limits doubling for both wrappers (from April 2018), but only for those investing in 'knowledge-intensive companies'.

However, the Chancellor also announced that low-risk, 'capital preservation-type investments' would no longer qualify for relief under these schemes, as a way of cracking down on investors using tax-efficient schemes to hold low-risk investments (rather than the high-risk companies they were originally designed to help).

These schemes will therefore not be as 'safe' as they once were. Consequently, it is essential to seek professional advice before making such investments.



Xmas Opening Hours

Our Offices will be closed from 1.00pm on Friday 22nd December 2017.

We will reopen at 8.30am on Tuesday 2nd January 2018.

We take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.

Self-Assessment Deadline

Whilst we may already be in the festive spirit, one surefire way to lose a few pounds after Christmas is by missing filing deadline for Self-Assessment.

For those who have not yet supplied us with your Accounts and Tax Return information; don't forget that the deadline for submission is **31 January 2018**.

We therefore need your records/ paperwork **as soon as possible** if we are to prepare your Accounts and Tax Return before the deadline. If you are unsure of what paperwork you need to provide, or if you need any help obtaining the required information, please contact us **as a matter of urgency**.

Christmas is a Joke!

1. Why is Father Christmas jolly when he comes to the UK? **Because he can claim Gift Relief.**
2. How do Santa's Helpers pay their Taxes? **Through Elf-Assessment.**
3. How will Christmas dinner be different after Brexit? **No Brussels.**

Disclaimer: Every care in preparing material contained within this publication is taken to ensure that the content is accurate and up to date. However due to continuing amendments and changes in legislation no responsibility for loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of the material can be accepted by Copson Grandfield.