GREAVES WEST & AYRE
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

WINTER 2026
NEWS
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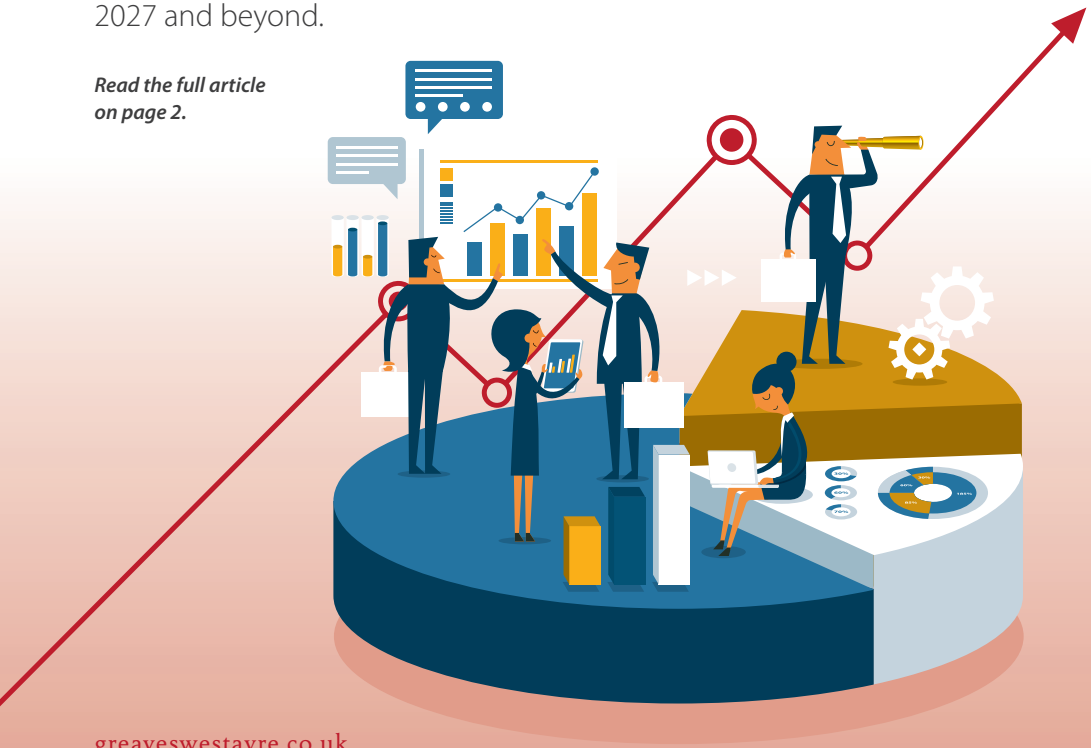
Autumn Budget 2026:
Commentary and Overview

The Chancellor's Autumn Budget 2026 was presented as providing "breathing space" for households and businesses. While many headline tax rates remain unchanged, the measures announced present a mixed picture for individuals, business owners, investors and retirees, with both planning opportunities and potential tax costs during 2027 and beyond.

Read the full article on page 2.



The Chancellor's Autumn Budget 2026 was presented as providing "breathing space" for households and businesses. While many headline tax rates remain unchanged, the measures announced present a mixed picture for individuals, business owners, investors and retirees, with both planning opportunities and potential tax costs during 2027 and beyond.

This article reviews the key tax announcements, unchanged measures and their implications. It also considers longer-term proposals, including changes to self-assessment payments, for which further details are awaited.

Stability in Headline Tax Rates

One of the most notable features of the Budget was what did not change. The main rates of Income Tax are unchanged, but there are changes for savings and property income. Corporation Tax remains at 25%, with the small profits rate staying at 19%. VAT rates are also unchanged, while National Insurance rates remain as previously announced.

The Budget makes no further change to dividend income tax rates, following the increase of two percentage points for the 2026/27 tax year.

Property and Savings Income: A Significant Change Ahead

As mentioned, one of the most significant announcements is the increase in tax rates on property and savings income from April 2027. Following the Budget 2025, these rates were due to rise by two percentage points. The increase has now been confirmed as four percentage points, taking the basic rate to 24%, the higher rate to 44% and the additional rate to 49%.

It is worth noting that the Scottish rate of Income Tax applies to property income, but not to savings income. The Scottish Budget is due to be held on 3 December 2026.

Landlords and individuals with substantial cash deposits or investment income should review their expected income levels well before these changes take effect. Depending on their circumstances, it may be worth exploring alternative ownership structures, making greater use of ISA allowances or considering the timing of income receipts.

Self-Assessment and Payments on Account: Proposed Changes from April 2029

Individuals within self-assessment will be familiar with payments on account: tax payments made in two instalments, one in January and one in July.

HMRC issued a consultation in June 2026 on proposed changes to how the self-employed pay their tax liabilities. The proposal to collect more tax through PAYE from those who are also in employment has since been shelved.

However, HMRC still intends to change how Income Tax is collected from those within self-assessment. From April 2029, the proposal is for more regular payments within the same tax year, with collection automated, e.g. by Direct Debit. The transition is likely to create cash flow concerns as payments for 2028/29 will be due in January and July 2029 alongside in-year payments for 2029/30. HMRC will issue further details of the proposals in due course.

Capital Gains and Business Exit Planning

Business Asset Disposal Relief (BADR) reduces the tax rate on qualifying gains from 24% to 18%. For qualifying disposals from 6 April 2027, the lifetime limit will fall from £1 million to £500,000. The maximum benefit will therefore fall from £60,000 to £30,000 from that date.

Alongside this, the Government has announced a new "Founders' Relief". The qualifying individual must hold at least 25% of the company's shares and votes. The company must be high growth in terms of either turnover or headcount and have turnover of at least £10m in the years prior to sale. The Government expects only 600 individuals a year to qualify for the relief.

Pension Planning Remains Attractive

Despite speculation before the Budget that pension tax relief and withdrawals could face further restrictions, no significant changes were made to these arrangements.

The annual pension allowance remains at £60,000, while the cap on the 25% tax-free lump sum remains frozen at £268,275. These measures preserve valuable tax planning opportunities for both employees and the self-employed.

The Government has also introduced a new Pension Tax Allowance from April 2027. Under the new system, individuals of State Pension Age with total annual income of £13,037 or less will not pay Income Tax. The allowance will gradually taper away, ceasing once income reaches £13,319. Income from any source qualifies for relief; it is not restricted to the State Pension or other pension income.

Utilising ISA Opportunities

Although a reduction in the cash ISA allowance had been planned, the allowance remains frozen at £20,000. This continues to offer a valuable opportunity to shelter savings, investments and future investment growth from tax. With property and savings income tax rates set to rise in April 2027, as discussed above, making full use of available ISA allowances may become even more important.

Small Business Owners and Sole Traders

The Budget includes several measures targeted at smaller businesses.

The trading allowance will increase from £1,000 to £3,000 from April 2027, simplifying tax reporting for individuals with smaller self-employed income streams.

For unincorporated businesses, first-year capital allowances on qualifying main-rate assets will rise from 40% to 50%. This could provide enhanced upfront tax relief on equipment purchases and investment.

However, the standard writing-down allowance will fall from 14% to 12%. This means businesses may receive slightly less relief over time on assets that do not qualify for first-year allowances.

The annual investment allowance is unaffected.

Business Rates and Commercial Property

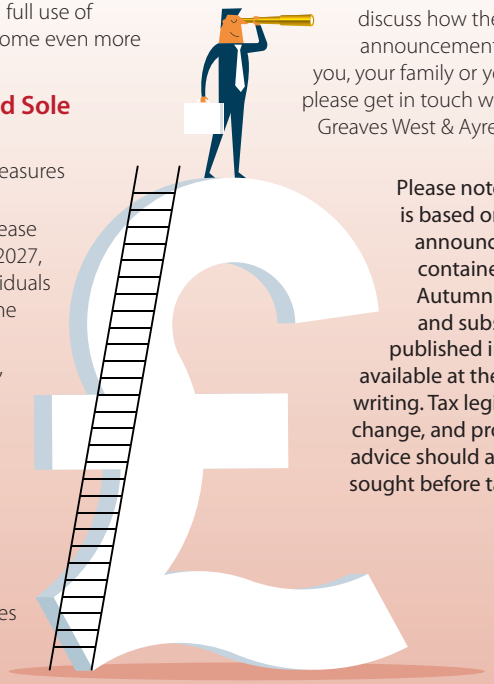
Smaller businesses will benefit from higher business rates relief thresholds from April 2027. The small business rates relief threshold will rise from £12,000 to £18,000, while the threshold for tapered relief will increase from £15,000 to £21,000.

For many small retailers, hospitality businesses and local service providers, this should provide some welcome support against rising operating costs.

Looking Ahead

The Chancellor has largely avoided major headline tax increases, but the Budget presents a mixed picture. The property and savings income tax changes bring additional costs, while pension planning opportunities remain valuable and some smaller businesses stand to benefit from increased reliefs.

Every situation is different, and early planning can create more options than waiting until the rules have changed. To discuss how the Budget announcements may affect you, your family or your business, please get in touch with your usual Greaves West & Ayre contact.



Please note: This article is based on the announcements contained within the Autumn Budget 2026 and subsequent published information available at the time of writing. Tax legislation may change, and professional advice should always be sought before taking action.

The **Scottish Budget 2027-28** will be presented to the Scottish Parliament on Thursday, 3 December 2026 by Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, Jenny Gilruth.

MGTS Qualis Funds Expanding the Range with Qualis Income

Generating an income while continuing to invest for the future is an important consideration for many clients, particularly as they approach retirement. The launch of the **MGTS Qualis Income Fund** in September 2026 adds a dedicated income strategy alongside the established Qualis Defensive and Growth funds.

Managed by GWA Asset Management Ltd, the expanded range gives your financial adviser greater flexibility when building a portfolio around your objectives, circumstances and attitude to investment risk.

Three Funds with Different Roles

Each MGTS Qualis Fund has a distinct purpose:



MGTS Qualis Growth focuses on long-term capital growth through global equity markets, investing across countries, industries and company sizes.

MGTS Qualis Defensive seeks capital growth with the potential for income through bonds and alternative investment strategies. It can provide diversification and help moderate a portfolio's overall fluctuations, although it can fall in value and does not guarantee capital protection.

MGTS Qualis Income aims to provide income, with the potential for capital growth, through investment in global equity markets.

Your adviser can recommend the funds individually, combine them in appropriate proportions or use them alongside existing investments. The suitable approach will depend on your personal financial plan.

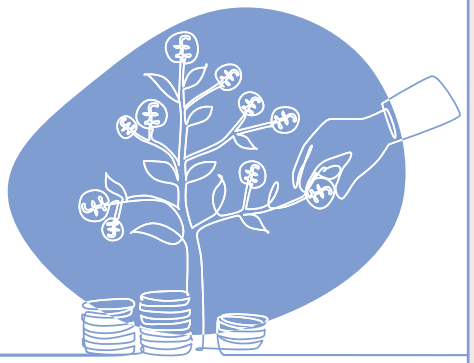
Introducing Qualis Income

For investors drawing from their portfolio, balancing current income needs with future growth remains a challenge. Qualis Income provides an additional option for addressing that balance.

The fund invests principally through actively and passively managed funds, including exchange-traded funds, providing exposure to companies across different regions and sectors. This diversifies its investments and sources of income, although diversification cannot eliminate investment risk.

Income units offer quarterly distributions, while accumulation units retain and reinvest income within the fund for investors who do not need payments today. Income levels can vary, and neither income nor capital growth is guaranteed.

As an equity fund, Qualis Income remains exposed to falls in share prices. Its suitability will depend on your investment timeframe, circumstances and ability to withstand losses.



Professional Management Personal Advice

Across the MGTS Qualis Fund range, investment decisions are supported by quantitative and qualitative research: analysing investment data alongside assessments of fund managers, strategies and portfolio holdings.

The fund management team selects and monitors the underlying investments. Your financial adviser determines how the funds could support your wider financial plans.

That distinction matters. An investor building wealth may prioritise growth, while someone approaching or living in retirement may require a different balance of growth, income and risk. The expanded range gives advisers more flexibility to respond to those needs as they evolve.

To discuss how the MGTS Qualis Funds could fit your circumstances, speak to your usual GWA adviser.

Fund factsheets and further information are available at **qualisfunds.co.uk**

QUALIS

Risk warning

Capital is at risk. The value of investments and the income from them can fall as well as rise, and you may get back less than you invest. Income is variable and not guaranteed. This article is for information only and does not constitute personal investment advice.

UK Mandatory VAT E-Invoicing: What You Need to Know

The UK Government has confirmed that electronic invoicing (e-invoicing) **will become mandatory for all VAT invoices from 2029**.

While many of the detailed requirements are still being developed, we thought it would be helpful to provide a brief overview of what is changing, what businesses should expect, and the steps you may wish to start considering now.

What is e-invoicing?

E-invoicing is not simply emailing a PDF invoice.

Instead, invoice data is created and exchanged in a structured digital format that accounting systems can automatically read and process without manual data entry. This allows invoices to move directly between accounting systems, improving accuracy and efficiency.

What's changing?

Currently, UK businesses can issue invoices in various formats, including paper and PDF. Under the new rules:

- Suppliers and customers will exchange invoice data electronically through compatible systems.
- Businesses are likely to require accounting or invoicing software capable of sending and receiving compliant e-invoices.

Why is the Government introducing it?

The Government expects e-invoicing to:

- Reduce manual processing and administrative costs.
- Improve cash flow and help businesses get paid faster.
- Reduce invoicing errors.
- Improve VAT compliance and reduce the tax gap.
- Help tackle late payments, particularly for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

Is this part of Making Tax Digital?

Not directly.

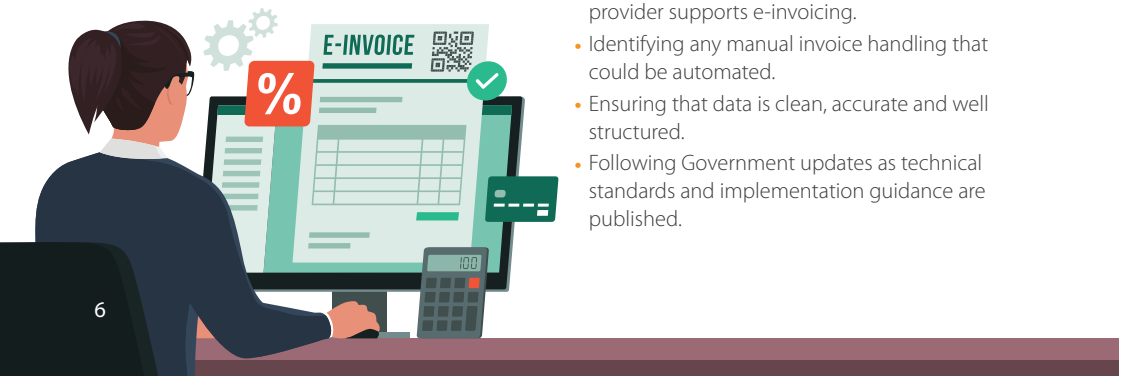
Making Tax Digital (MTD) focuses on keeping digital records and submitting VAT returns electronically. E-invoicing goes a step further by digitising the actual invoice exchange process between businesses. Many tax professionals see it as the next stage of the UK's tax digitalisation programme.

Do businesses need to take action now?

The detailed scope, exemptions, technical standards, transmission arrangements and enforcement provisions have not yet been published. The Government has said that an implementation roadmap will be published after the Budget 2026.

Whilst there is no immediate requirement, businesses should start preparing by:

- Reviewing current invoicing processes.
- Checking whether their accounting software provider supports e-invoicing.
- Identifying any manual invoice handling that could be automated.
- Ensuring that data is clean, accurate and well structured.
- Following Government updates as technical standards and implementation guidance are published.



Making Tax Digital: £30,000 threshold from April 2027

The next phase of Making Tax Digital (MTD) for Income Tax comes into effect from **6 April 2027**, bringing more self-employed individuals and landlords within the new reporting regime. From that date, sole traders and landlords, whose qualifying income exceeded £30,000 in the 2025/26 tax year, will be required to use MTD for Income Tax.

HMRC defines qualifying income broadly as the gross income, before expenses or tax deductions, from self-employment and property combined. Importantly, the £30,000 test applies to turnover rather than profit. For example, someone receiving £20,000 of gross rental income and £15,000 of self-employment income would have combined qualifying income of £35,000 and would therefore fall within MTD from April 2027.

We are already supporting many clients with the MTD reporting that started in April 2026, and on completion of the 2025/26 tax returns, we are proactively reaching out to the clients who will be within the scope of MTD for Income Tax from April 2027.

If you have any questions or would like support in preparing for these changes, please get in touch with us – **MTD@gwayre.co.uk**

P11Ds Are Being Phased Out – Mandatory Payrolling of Benefits from April 2027

From **6 April 2027**, most taxable employee benefits will need to be processed through payroll, replacing the traditional P11D process for most employers.

We will contact affected clients between February and March 2027 to review current employee benefits and support the transition. Relevant benefits will be included in payroll from April 2027, with final P11Ds covering the year to **5 April 2027** being prepared by **July 2027**.

If you would like to prepare in advance or review your payroll processes, please contact **Dianne Bradshaw**, Payroll Manager.



Border Union Agricultural Society Bursary – financial support available for study and development

If you are looking to advance your personal or professional development and you live in the Scottish Borders or North Northumberland, the Border Union Agricultural Society (BUAS) can offer financial support in the form of bursaries to people within its area of benefit.

Whether you wish to acquire or develop leadership skills (for example through the Scottish Rural Leadership Programme) or undertake a study that is relevant to developing your business, you are invited to apply for financial support from BUAS. All aspects of business life across the rural economy of the Borders are eligible; the fundamental criteria is that any support given should, with time, be for the ultimate benefit of the Borders economy.

Since the scheme was introduced in 2013, over 60 awards have been given to individuals across the BUAS area, supporting bespoke study courses as well as formal programmes such as those offered by the Worshipful Company of Farmers, Institute of Agricultural Management and the Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth.

For further information on the scheme including Terms & Conditions – and the application form visit the BUAS website **www.borderunion.co.uk/education** or email **info@borderunion.co.uk**

Deadlines for applications run throughout the year, as follows: 31st March, 30th June, 30th September and 31st December.

Economic Insights from Our Webinar with the Bank of England

In October, we were delighted to host one of our regular webinars in partnership with the Bank of England, providing clients and professional contacts with valuable insight into the current economic landscape and the factors shaping the UK's financial outlook.

Attendees heard directly from Mauricio Armellini, Agent for the Northeast, who explored key topics including inflation, interest rates, economic growth, labour market trends, and the challenges and opportunities facing businesses and individuals across the UK.

If you were unable to attend, you can view the webinar and Bank of England presentation slides on the website - **greaveswestayre.co.uk/news-and-events/**

BANK OF ENGLAND

Looking Ahead: February 2027 Webinar

We are pleased to confirm that we will be hosting another economic webinar in **February 2027**, with Iain Duff, **Scottish Agent for the Bank of England**.

This session will provide an updated assessment of economic conditions and explore the key developments expected to impact businesses, investors and households as we move through 2027.

Further details and registration information will be shared closer to the event.



GWA Wealth Management Expands Its Adviser Expertise

We are pleased to announce that Kenny Boyd has achieved the status of Chartered Financial Planner within our Wealth Management team.

Already a highly experienced professional with many years in the industry under his belt, Kenny has successfully met the rigorous criteria required to secure this advanced professional title. This accomplishment reflects his deep technical knowledge, adherence to a strict code of ethics, and an ongoing commitment to the highest standards of professional practice.

Commenting on his achievement, Kenny said; "I am delighted to have attained Chartered status with GWA and look forward to continuing to build strong relationships with my clients. Helping people navigate their financial journey and achieve their personal goals is incredibly rewarding, and this advanced qualification ensures I can continue to offer the best possible guidance for the opportunities ahead."

John Coats, Partner at Greaves West & Ayre, added; "We are delighted that Kenny has achieved this important milestone and is now authorised as a Chartered Financial Planner. His advanced status further elevates our Wealth Management team, which boasts seven Independent Financial Advisers, and significantly enhances the specialised expertise and support we can offer our clients.

This is an exciting period for the GWA Wealth Management team as we continue to grow and develop our services. Kenny's achievement reflects both his dedication and professionalism; it further strengthens our ability to deliver the Quality Advice and Quality Service that our clients have come to expect from GWA."

GWA's Wealth Management team provides tailored financial planning and investment advice to individuals, families and business owners, helping clients plan confidently for their future while working towards their long-term financial objectives.

Autumn Seminars 2026

Autumn is always a key time for our rural team, with a programme of seminars designed to coincide with the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and help farming and rural businesses plan for the future.

Our first event took place on 10 November in East Lothian, co-hosted with **Turcan Connell** and **Savills**, bringing together farmers, landowners and rural business owners to discuss economic conditions, tax changes, succession planning and wider sector challenges.

We followed this with our **Rural Business Outlook 2026: Looking Ahead with Confidence** seminar at Berwick Rugby Club on 19 November. Attendees heard from a range of expert speakers, including **Tri-Grain Ltd**, who provided an update on agricultural health & safety, and **Cheviot Vets**, who shared insights on animal welfare and sustainable farming practices.

Thank you to everyone who attended. If you would like copies of the presentations or seminar materials, please email **events@gwayre.co.uk**



Greaves West & Ayre & Three Counties Limited – Festive Office Opening Hours

As the holiday season approaches, we would like to take this opportunity to extend our warmest wishes to all our clients, colleagues, and associates.

Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

Our office opening hours during the festive period are as follows:

Wednesday 23 December Our offices will be open as normal, closing at **5pm** in Haddington and Bournmoor and **5:30pm** in Berwick-upon-Tweed.

From **Thursday 24 December – Monday 28 December 2026**: All offices - **CLOSED**

From **Tuesday 29 December 2026 – Thursday 31 December**:
All offices are available to clients via prior appointment/agreement.

Friday 1 January: All offices - **CLOSED**

From **Monday 4 January 2027** our normal office hours resume.

Thank you for all your support throughout 2026.



Community News

One of the many things that makes Northumberland, the Scottish Borders and East Lothian such special places to live, and work is the strength, character and community spirit found across the region. At Greaves West & Ayre, supporting local events, organisations and initiatives is an important part of who we are.

These events and initiatives play an important role in our communities, whether through supporting local businesses, raising funds for charitable causes, celebrating rural life, encouraging participation in sport and the arts, or promoting the region to a wider audience.

Community involvement in late summer included sponsorship and support for the **Berwick Trade 4s**, **Berwick Food & Beer Festival**, **MNDA Charity Bowls**, **Glendale Show**, **Holm Show** and **Alwinton Show**.

We have also been delighted to support **Reston Concert Band**, **Haddington Pipe Band** and **Haddington RFC**.

More recently, we have supported the **Berwick Literary Festival** and the launch of the new **Berwick Style & Culture** publication. Created to celebrate the people, places, businesses and creativity that makes Berwick-upon-Tweed unique. The publication highlights the town's rich heritage, vibrant cultural scene and growing reputation as a destination to visit, live in and work.

As we head into winter, we are looking forward to sponsoring the **Visit Berwick Photography Exhibition** at the Old Brewery Artists' Studios. We are also continuing our support for the **Berwick Chamber of Trade Christmas Loyalty Scheme**, helping to encourage residents and visitors to shop locally and support independent businesses during the festive season.

As a business with deep roots in Northumberland, the Scottish Borders and East Lothian, we value every opportunity to support the organisations, volunteers and community groups whose dedication helps our local communities thrive. We are proud to play a small part in their success and look forward to building on these partnerships and supporting local initiatives in the months ahead.

Staff Community Outreach Initiative

Through this we have supported:

- **Kelso in Bloom** – Leesa Watson
- **Berwick Rangers Juniors U7s Falcons** – Neil Morton
- **Jed Jaguars Mini Rugby** – Carron McEwen
- **Berwick Rangers Juniors U9's Wolves** – Catriona Robertson
- **Berwick & District Darts League** – Andrew Blair
- **Amanda Loscombe School of Dance** – Lisa Godfrey
- **Dunbar RBL Veterans Breakfast Club** – Julie Adams
- **East Linton Brownies** – Taylor Maphin

Kelso in Bloom ►

Berwick Rangers Juniors U7s Falcons ▼



Jed Jaguars Mini Rugby ►

Berwick Rangers Juniors U9's Wolves ▲

East Linton Brownies ►

Staff News



Welcoming New Colleagues Across GWA

As our firm continues to grow, we are delighted to welcome several new colleagues to various teams across the business. Each brings valuable experience, fresh perspectives and a shared commitment to delivering excellent service to our clients.

Our Accounts Team recently welcomed three new Trainee CA Graduates as part of our 2026 intake. **Mitchell Swan** joined us in August, followed by **Wesley Cave** and **Katleho Semuli** in September as they begin their professional training and careers with GWA.

Within our Wealth Management Team, **Molly Dalgleish** joined us in August as a Trainee Paraplanner.

We have also welcomed two senior appointments. **Chris Howard** joined GWA Asset Management (GWAAM) as Business Development Manager, while **Chris Naylor** joined the firm as Chief People Officer, bringing significant expertise to support the continued development of our business and our people.

Within our Three Counties office **Ian Rutherford** recently joined as an Independent Financial Adviser.

Finally, we are pleased to welcome **Claire Nisbet** and **Ruth Minto** to our Berwick Administration Team. Their support will play an important role in ensuring the smooth day-to-day operation of the practice.

We extend a warm welcome to all our new colleagues and wish them every success in their careers with GWA.

Au Revior

Angela Bruce in our HR Team and **Rona Hart** in our Administration Team both retire in November.

On behalf of everyone at GWA, we would like to thank them for their hard work and dedication over the years and wish them both a long, happy and well-deserved retirement.

Long Service

Congratulations to **Natalie Beveridge** who recently celebrated 20 years of service.

Well Done

Congratulations to **Mark Whitehead** and **Chris Semple** who have both recently qualified as Chartered Accountants.

Well done to **Tom Deans** in our Wealth Management Team, who recently passed his CII L4 diploma in Financial Services.

Kenny Boyd has achieved the status of Chartered Financial Planner within our Wealth Management Team read more on page 9.

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