

## ONLINE TRADER CRACKDOWN

People trading on eBay and other internet transaction sites who fail to pay tax on their profits are being targeted by HMRC. Traders have been told to use the e-Markets Disclosure Facility by 14 June to make disclosures, with tax payments to be made by 14 September. Lower penalties will be imposed than if traders are caught by HMRC. Marian Wilson, head of HMRC campaigns, said: 'This is part of a wider HMRC initiative to provide support and guidance to the public on tax evasion and is aimed at people using online marketplaces to buy and sell goods as a trade or business. Those who only sell a few items and who are not traders are unlikely to be liable to pay tax on what they sell and will not be targeted by this campaign.' HMRC warns that it will collate information from different sources to target online traders who do not voluntarily make disclosures.



## BUILDERS 'OVERPAYING TAX'

Tax refund adviser Rift calculates that £180m of tax refunds are being unclaimed each year by UK construction workers. It believes that around half a million permanent employees could be eligible for tax refunds on travel between temporary workplaces. The firm says that while the self-employed normally deduct travel expenses as part of their annual self-assessment, PAYE workers often fail to claim back legitimate expenses. Rift says that almost £12.5m of tax refunds are going unclaimed in London alone, with a further £4.7m unclaimed in both Birmingham and Glasgow.

# The view from:

London: **Ben Bidnell** FCCA,  
principal, Shipleys



### Q Tell us about your career journey to become principal of Shipleys.

A I started my career at the ripe old age of 18 at Deloitte (which was then known as Touche Ross) at its Cambridge office in a team specialising in owner-managed businesses.

I initially sat the AAT exams and then

passed the ACCA exams in 1999.

I subsequently moved to London and worked for Haines Watts before joining Shipleys in late 2002. I was then promoted to principal in 2007.

### Q Describe a typical client.

A My clients are typically owner-managed, AIM-listed, have an overseas connection or are part of a complex group; but they all require corporate finance advice of one form or another.

### Q One of your clients was a diamond mine in Sierra Leone, could that have been perhaps the most unconventional business you have had to audit to date?

A Every client has their own particular set of circumstances which makes them unique and unconventional!

The diamond mine in Sierra Leone was certainly a journey into the unknown for the first visit, but, if you ignore the surroundings, the finance department was like any other and it even used Pegasus for the accounts package.

### Q What has been your greatest achievement so far?

A I was recently told by a director of a struggling family owned business that my input had been key in securing the company's future. In the current economic climate, I'm proud of that.

## FIRM FACTS

**Aim:** To help entrepreneurs do the deal which moves their business to the next stage



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