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Hello again and welcome to our latest newsletter.

Please keep your comments and suggestions coming in, especially on the upcoming changes. Thanks.

WIP Hours

Two users have been in touch to say their WIP hours show to several decimal places. Curious.

We haven't been able to get a copy of their data to look at this, and so are struggling to find out how or why it happens. Do they use fractions of units? Do they time record other than in non-standard six minute units? Is this a corruption of data we've converted from previous systems? And, so far, we haven't been able to reproduce the problem, so can't see how to solve it.

We like a good mystery, but really would like to get to the bottom of this phenomena. If you spot that you also have this — when posting, look to the figures at the top right of the screen and see what the WIP Hrs figure is (we're looking for something like 11.29997) - and would like to help, please get in touch so that we can take a copy of your data and then have a good go at trying to find out where, when and how this happens. And rectify the problem.

Thanks.

Backup / Licences

You'll notice that the number of licences shown on your login page is one more than the number you've asked us for. This is because the backup process requires a spare licence.

If a computer closes down with Blue Tuesday still open, it can cause that licence to be locked (and/or data corruption, a whole other story), so that it appears that all your licences are in use. Which means that, when you go into Backup, the backup button itself will be greyed out (unusable), so taking a backup will be impossible. Dangerous, very dangerous.

Should you spot that more licences than should be are in use, please contact us so we can look at what's going wrong.

And please encourage all users to log out of the system when they get caught up with something else or leave their desk. A Microsoft update, an automatic closedown, power interruptions - there's lots of things that can cause a reboot, which in turn can lock a licence.

It is good practice to make sure that all users log out of Blue Tuesday each evening, essential that a back up is taken, and sensible to close each computer down. Hackers can't access a computer which is switched off.

Hints, Tips & Other News

* If you get an error message, please contact us immediately or at least make a note of the message. That first message is the best clue as to what's gone wrong, so we need to know what it was in order to help you as quickly as possible.

* Making Tax Digital is looming. HMRC were supposed to let software developers know their preliminary requirements in April this year, but they still haven't been in touch. As soon as we know what they want and when it will become mandatory, rest assured that we'll be working flat out on it.

* You (or we) can copy and anonymise your client data at the touch of a button — see overleaf — but it won't be reversible, so please think this through before you hit the button.

* If you ring us during normal office hours and we aren't able to answer, it may be that we're all busy. Our phone system notes missed calls so we can return them. Or you can either leave a message, which will be picked up when we can, or email, which will be quicker because we all get the emails. Please don't just hang up and ring Angela's mobile—she will probably have to interrupt another call simply to explain that she's already on the phone, which just prolongs an existing call and delays your call back.

Future Plans — Latest

We've started on the changes to the system mentioned in our last newsletter, and here's a progress report to date. These will all be available on the next update, but could be available now if you specifically need them. They've not been rolled out yet as we prefer everyone to be on the same revision, plus we're still working on ideas, but please get in touch if you think you would like these changes sooner rather than later.

Anonymised Data

Within the backup routine we've added a new button, GDPR Export. This anonymises client names, addresses, phone numbers and emails, plus matter headers and puts the copy data in the main True Blue folder, not in backups. It means that if we need to take your data to work on it, you'll be able to anonymise client/matter information and we hope we can work out whatever the accounts problem is, based just on the matter number. We cannot return the data in unanonymised format but should be able to sort out the problem on your live data. However, please don't use this as an alternative to a normal backup because it's not reversible.

Conflict Search

Running a conflict search will include a search of the notes boxes, meaning that you can put details of, for example, other parties in there for future data searches.

Deposit Direct

The next revision has the ability to post direct payments and receipts to and from special designated client accounts (which we still call deposit accounts because a) it's easier and quicker to say and/or type and b) sometimes old habits die hard) without affecting client account. There's a new button in the Matters screen, Deposit Direct, with the option to post a payment, receipt or interest, which means there will be no need to post the interest through the Deposit Transfers options after this update, and transactions don't go onto the Client bank so reconciliations are easier.

Deposit Report

There's an option within both the Deposit Direct and Deposit Transfers tabs to view just the deposit transactions. It's after the L (ledger) and T (time) options, and is labelled **D**. Only deposit transactions show on the ledgers, but the current balances on client and office side are there too. The Ledger Card Report is already available in this way.

Error Messages

We've started the process of improving error message information so that some messages will show what the error is as well as the location of the error occurrence, which should speed up our being able to identify and rectify, and therefore be able to be more efficient. We hope to roll this out to cover pretty much all known error messages.

Ghost Clients

The problem which one or two users are having with "ghost clients" - i.e., ones which they've input but can't be found - should be a thing of the past because matters will only be written to the database when a valid client exists.

Login Record

User login records will show the date and time as well as the author of each login on the Backup form, which should help identify if a screen has been left logged in, which blocks a backup and can clog up the in-use licence count.

Matter Completion / WIP

When a date completed is entered on a matter, there will be an option to reduce WIP to nil. Thanks for this idea, we like it and think other people will too.

Nominal Screen Sorting

When you look at the statement section of the Nominal tab in Accounts, click on the word 'date' in the headers and the report will show transactions in descending order (latest first) rather than the default ascending order (oldest first). Click again to revert to descending order.

Paid Bills

Looking at a ledger card, bills that have been settled will be marked with a 'p'. This will only work on bills both posted and settled from the date of the update and we're unable to apply it retrospectively, so old paid bills or pre-update bills won't show that mark.