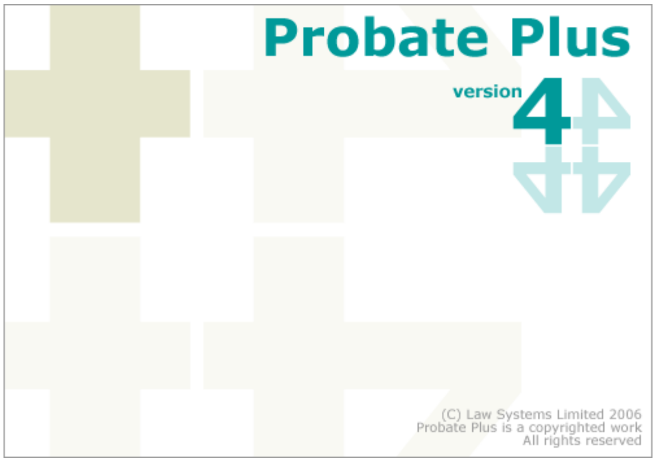

Probate Plus v4

Probate administration and management software

Welcome to the latest update to the popular probate administration and management software, Probate Plus.

Firstly, we'd like to thank you for choosing Probate Plus. Originally conceived to merely assist in the production of estate accounts, Probate Plus is now in its 6th major release. At the core there's still an easy to use system, auto-balancing and auto-generating consistent estate accounts for your probate practice whatever the size of estate.

Over the years we've added more and more functionality, sometimes due to legislation changes, but mainly by listening to you, the user of Probate Plus.

We think Probate Plus v4 is the best probate management system available today. It's fast, flexible, scalable from single user to multi-site networks, sensibly priced and it's testament to the success of the product that we've seen job adverts requiring that Probate Plus experience be an advantage to the candidate.

Probate Plus is already in use by private individuals, all sizes of law firms, accountancy practices and professional estate administration companies. With this release, we hope to expand Probate Plus' appeal further so let's dive right in and see what's new with version 4.

Reports and reporting options.

As the main focus of Probate Plus is account and report generation, it's no surprise that there are many changes in this area. Here we go…

Reports…

- Date ranging of report. We've been asked for this one a few times and it's meant some big changes behind the scenes in Probate Plus. You can now date range pretty much any report. Set the start/end (either or both) and the report will run for postings in that time period only.
- New report – liabilities linked to assets, by asset.
- New report – administration expenses linked to asset realisations, by asset realisation.

- New report – difference in value of liabilities between probate value and actual value paid.
- New report – asset "initial position". Shows asset base value, accrued income etc. Useful for supporting values on IHT forms.
- New report – purchased assets and their transactions.
- New report – asset summary showing only categories and column totals.
- New report – address book print facility.
- Balance sheet – hide sections that have zero value. Eg appropriations to residuary beneficiaries make little sense in EPA/COP cases so hiding them seemed the right option.
- Reviewed the legacy report so that we do not get empty columns.
- Non-taxable income treated separately rather than as "gross" in income report.
- Income reports by year or tax rate also now show debits against income.
- Joint property (and other "non-asset" values) listed on estate capital account summary report.
- Income and non-estate item totals added to estate summary report.
- Total of net (available) income added to estate summary report.
- Modified asset report to show assets passing by legacy but not yet transferred as "pending transfer".
- Legacies report also reports "pending" transfers.
- Cash account report respects the sort order at the time the report is run.
- Assets report shift columns to the right to avoid blank space.
- Reworded estate summary report to read "gain or loss on realisation of assets during administration" rather than "adjustment on realisation of assets".
- "Parent" asset shown in report and expenses browser where expense linked to asset. (Eg expenses on sale of asset).

Exporting / sending of reports…

- New – export reports to DOC (Microsoft Word).
- New – export reports to PDF (Adobe Acrobat).
- New – export reports to XLS (Microsoft Excel).
- New - email PDF copies of reports.

Miscellaneous / settings…

- Re-run last report with 1-click from "Reports" menu.
- New Probate Plus "assistant" to show all reports, grouped by job area / timeline.
- When running a report that needs residuary beneficiaries or legatees a warning appears if the report can't be run.
- Added sub-total font setting in report setup screen. Previously sub-totals just used the totals font.
- Option to "Compact creditors" in expense reports. When more than xx creditors, compact the expenses for the creditor to one line with a single total for the creditor.
- Option for percentages to be shown on capital distribution summary report / distribution.
- Option to display date of death on reports with the deceased name on the page header.
- Option to hide assets that have been fully dealt with. IE a "current position" that will ignore assets that were fully dealt with at a point in time.
- Option to set capitalisation of deceased's name on reports.
- Residuary beneficiary report alphabetically sorted on addressee field.

Core functions.

Changes and new features to the way Probate Plus works. We've grouped them into areas of work. The "main user interface" refers to how you interact with Probate Plus. We've brought the interface up to date and made it more flexible.

Main user interface…

- "Task Panel" showing common tasks, views etc for the screen you're working on.
- Sorting by first name / surname in "File..Open" dialog.
- Option to open a matter when application opened with no previous matter open.
- Matters list – show matters without date of death differently.
- Show list of recently opened matters in the "File" menu.
- Estate info screen sizing remembered between sessions.
- Hints correctly display on Add/Edit/Delete/Refresh buttons.
- Back/Forward buttons can be operated by mouse (if you mouse has back/forward buttons) or ALT+LEFT / ALT+RIGHT.
- Display value of unpaid legacies in estate summary.
- Drill down for adjustments on appropriation from estate summary screen.
- More user filtering of diary views.
- New grids and layout for all browser screens. Simplified layouts.
- Diary view, more like a calendar on "Probate Plus Today" screen.
- Name of client/deceased added to estate information screen.
- Application caption only changed after matter has opened.
- Many new options and settings in "Options..Configure system" menu.

Estate setup…

- Option to auto-add deceased's residence from the estate setup wizard.
- Force NI number to have no spaces when using estate setup Wizard.

Addressees…

- New browser – list of addressees connected to estate (in any capacity). Much easier when having to write to an addressee.
- Address book – more columns available when customising views.

Assets…

- Asset browser (viewing / browsing assets)
    - Speed improvements when displaying asset browser view.
    - Asset tasks that are not relevant to the current asset type are hidden.
    - View of modified assets in asset browser.
    - When date column hidden in asset browser, date is included in transaction description.
    - Assets browser, estate/non-estate assets differentiated with own icons.

- Recording asset details.
    - New dialog when choosing asset categories.
    - Replace "sub-category" with "tax-category" for assets. Only show tax-category entries in the list rather than all asset categories.
    - New "Ownership status" field for assets. Replaces "IHT Joint xxx" now assets can be set to "Whole, Joint" etc.
    - Prevents setting an asset as "income only" if the asset has been partially or completely dealt with.
    - When adding a non-estate asset (eg GIVs, Settled Property), PPv4 doesn't ask to create cash account, accrued income or auto-collect.

- Purchasing assets.
    - Assets can be marked as "purchased" out of estate cash.
    - Prevent modification for purchased assets.
    - Prevent setting as "income only" for purchased assets.

- Realisation.
  - Part realisation of assets. Realising assets but entering “0” for the quantity realised will treat all “0” quantity realisations for that asset as part realisations (such as by auction). The asset will move out of the “retained” column but as many part-realisations can be entered as you like.
  - When auto-collecting an asset (after it has been initially added to PP) the date of death is used at the notional realisation date rather than today’s date.
  - Where expense linked to asset, give option to add/change/break the link from the expense details rather than having to locate the asset, then the realisation, then link the expense to the realisation.

- Miscellaneous.
  - Check for fully dealt with asset prior to making a posting to the asset.

Income…

- For deceased estates, warning if pre-death income has been entered. Show on “Probate Plus today” screen.
- Income categories “Trading income” and “Unit trust income” and “Tax free” added.
- For income receipts, show the source asset in the dialog. Can change the source asset from the income dialog.
- Income receipt dialog, the income type is set to “NET” by default, rather than blank.

Expenses…

- Split liabilities browser to show regular liabilities, funeral expenses and those linked to assets.
- Split administration expenses browser to show regular expenses and those linked to realisations of assets.
- Ability to “add another” expense for an existing creditor rather than having to choose the creditor from scratch.
- “Parent” asset shown in expenses browser where expense linked to asset. (Eg expenses on sale of asset).

Beneficiaries…

- Hotchpot value can be entered when adding residuary beneficiary. (Hotchpot - An amount advanced to a residuary beneficiary during lifetime to be brought back into estate). Probate Plus automatically works out all the hotchpot credits/debits for all beneficiaries.
- When over-distributing to a residuary beneficiary, warning shown.
- Where no residuary beneficiaries entered, pop-up to ask to add residuary beneficiaries.
- Warning if residuary beneficiary entitlement exceeds 100%.
- Auto-distribution assistant. Allows you to easily set up distributions to a number of beneficiaries at once.

Legacies and legatees…

- Legacies browser can hide paid or transferred legacies.

Cash accounts…

- Ability to reconcile source and target accounts for cash account transfers. (Previously reconciled both sides of the transfer at the same time).
- Check for presence of purchased assets before allowing deletion of a cash account.
- Right-click to allow transfer of funds INTO and OUT OF cash accounts direct from cash browser.

- Cash browser split to show “internal” and “external” cash accounts. (External accounts are those for which you do not have full control over – eg unlike client a/c which is internal to your practice).

PDF form support.

Probate Plus v3 works well with the freely available PDF forms from the Inland Revenue by using the fill-and-save functions of Adobe Acrobat v4 or higher, we’ve streamlined and improved form support…

- Ability to save copy of active PDF form to document history folder.
- Increase performance of form filling engine by allowing in-line variables in filling scripts.
- Added a PDF form “Wizard” to guide you through the process of form filling.
- If IHT form couldn’t cope with the number of entries that were present in PPv4 (eg too many stocks and shares), PPv4 will just insert totals and can provide a supporting report to accompany the form.
- Much more progress on status of form filling provided.
- PDF form filler can optionally highlight the fields that PPv4 can fill in on your form.
- Ability to pre-format fields prior to filling them. Eg UPPERCASE / rounding etc.
- “IF” keyword added to form filling engine to enable decision making during form filling.

Documents

New features and changes relating to how Probate Plus produces and manages documents and interacts with the Microsoft Word wordprocessor. We’ve added functions to make our existing document pack more flexible and to make it easier for 3rd party developers to use the document pack.

- New – central document history storage folder.
- New – option to save copy of completed document to central storage folder (either after each fill or print or both).
- New – option to convert a “live” Probate Plus document to a static one that can be saved to disk.
- New - option to create diary reminder after saving document to history folder.
- On completion of update of Word document, cursor is moved to top of document.
- New – text link field of “occupation of deceased”.
- New – text link field of “additional description”.
- New – text link field of “their ref”.
- New – text link field of “reference” for addressees.
- New – text link field of “fee earner email”.
- New – text link lists for “residuary beneficiaries”, “pecuniary legacies” and “specific legacies”.
- New – ability to apply a Word style template (eg font / layout) to the document prior to filling links.
- Improve document filling performance.

How Probate Plus v4 works with other applications.

We’ve had a number of requests to open up Probate Plus to make it easier for 3rd party developers and their applications to work and control Probate Plus, so…

- Many new document filling / archiving capabilities exposed via COM interface.
- PPv4 is brought uppermost when user interaction required from COM server interface. (Eg when a 3rd party program instructs PPv4 to carry out a task)
- Ability to add new matter via COM (remote control) or auto-adding a new matter reference.
- Archive / Un-archive matter via COM.
- Test for existing matter via COM.
- Set PPv4 visibility via COM.
- When starting via COM, PPv4 defaults to hidden (no icon, task manager only).
- For 3rd party developers, type library and API available for Probate Plus.

The database engine (Advantage Database from Sybase).

The database engine is key to performance, reliability and handles all the processing of your day-to-day work with Probate Plus. The database engine that ships with Probate Plus has been upgraded to v8 (up from v6.2).

- PPv4 requires at least v8 of Advantage Database Server. This only applies if you are using PP with a remote database server. You'll need to upgrade to v8 or higher. ADS v8 offers much higher performance and new features that PPv4 takes advantage of.
- Many upgrades to database schema to cope with new PPv4 features.
- Embedded MIDAS.DLL support into PPv4.
- Enlarged field for DX name in address book.
- Holding CTRL at start-up of PPv4 opens database setup dialog.

HASP – licencing system.

The pay-as-you-go licencing system has been working well. It's a cost effective and simple to use system. We've had to only make a few minor modifications…

- Fixed bug where PPv3 would not release HASP user count for workstation. User lock would timeout after 34hrs but this often meant "too many users" error would pop-up unnecessarily.

Internet.

As always, more integration with the Internet such as feeds direct into Probate Plus v4. We've embedded Internet exploring into the PPv4 main browser (optional setting), added more links and..

- Ability to email PDF copies of reports via MAPI. Added "email report" to print preview window.
- Easy selection of recipients from print preview window.
- Integrated Internet browser into PPv4 main window.
- Online help system.

Law Systems Limited are the developers of Probate Plus.