CPL SOFTWARE

PARTNERS TO PROPERTY FACTORS
& BLOCK MANAGERS

CLIENT NOTICES

TRAINING GUIDE

SEP 2019

Version 1.4

CPL SOFTWARE

PARTNERS TO PROPERTY FACTORS & BLOCK MANAGERS

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CPL SOFTWARE

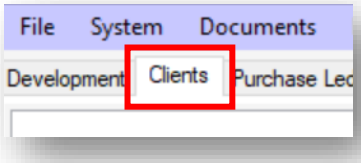
PARTNERS TO PROPERTY FACTORS & BLOCK MANAGERS

CLIENT NOTICES

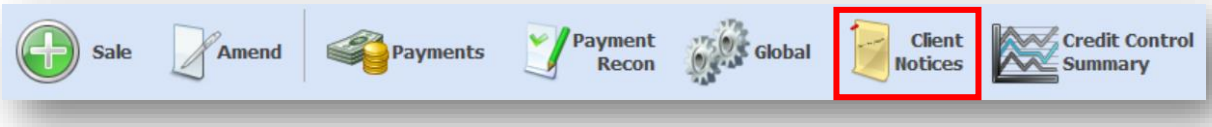
Client Notices is a feature which allows you to manage the debt recovery process within your organisation by sending letters/ emails to clients who are outwith your payment terms. The actual setup of the number of days grace and whether or not you charge Late Payment Fees etc is configured behind the scenes and you should speak with a CPL representative if you wish this changed. From here you can run multiple Client Notice types in your debt recovery procedure and charge your clients based on different notice levels. In order for these fees to be set in your system please contact CPL Support via the support portal provided by Zoho.

LOCATING CLIENT NOTICES

At the top of the main CPL screen click on the **Clients** tab:



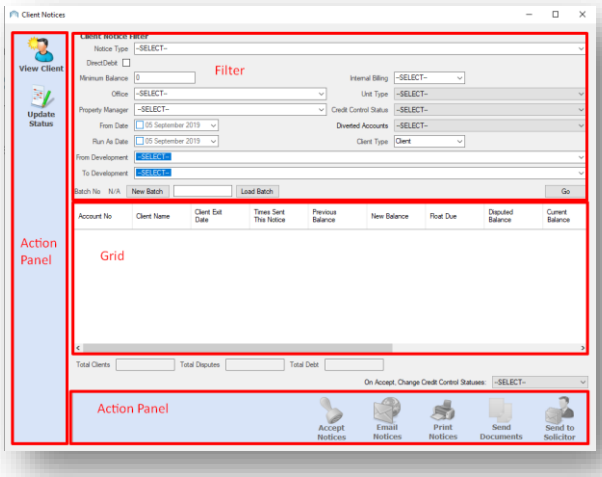
Towards the bottom of the **Clients** window you will see the blue Action Panel:



Within the panel, click on **Client Notices**. This will open up a separate Client Notices screen.

CLIENT NOTICES SCREEN

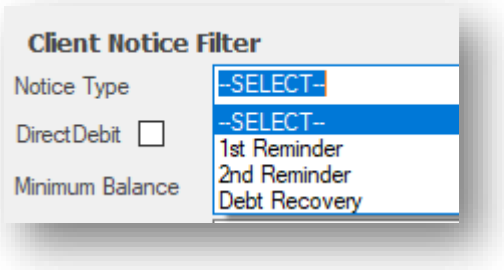
This screen has a slightly different appearance to other screens within CPL. You will notice there is a **Client Notice Filter** at the top, a grid in the middle and two **Action Panels**, one on the left and one at the bottom of the screen.



CLIENT NOTICE FILTER

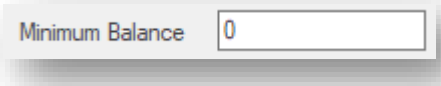
In the **Client Notice Filter** you will be entering information which will enable you to find the clients who owe money.

Firstly, select a **Notice Type** from the options available in the drop-down list in your system corresponding to the stage of notice you would like to send. These notice types match each stage within your debt recovery procedure and as discussed above, are set up behind the scenes. Your Notice Types may look different to the ones in the example below.

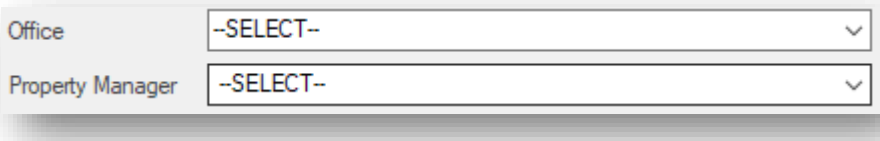


If appropriate, click to insert a tick in the box if you're working with clients who are on a **Direct Debit**.

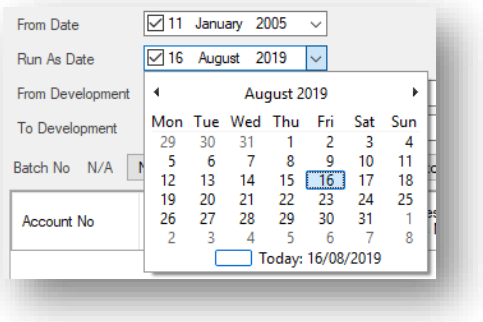
Setting a **Minimum Balance** allows you to set a minimum amount you wish to chase clients for. Enter a corresponding amount into this box. This field is mandatory and requires an amount greater than zero to be entered.



The **Office** and **Property Manager** filters are optional and you may wish to select options from the drop-down menus for your system.



The next step is to select a **From** and **Run As** date corresponding to the periods you wish to cover.

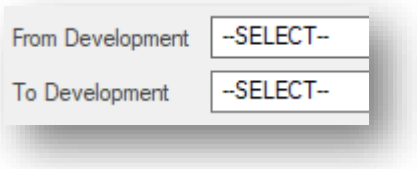


Click to place a tick in the box and you will then gain access to the calendar via the drop-down arrow and be able to select appropriate dates. Please note you can click on the month and year at the top of the calendar to go directly to a specific year and month and will be quicker than using only the arrows within the calendar to scroll.

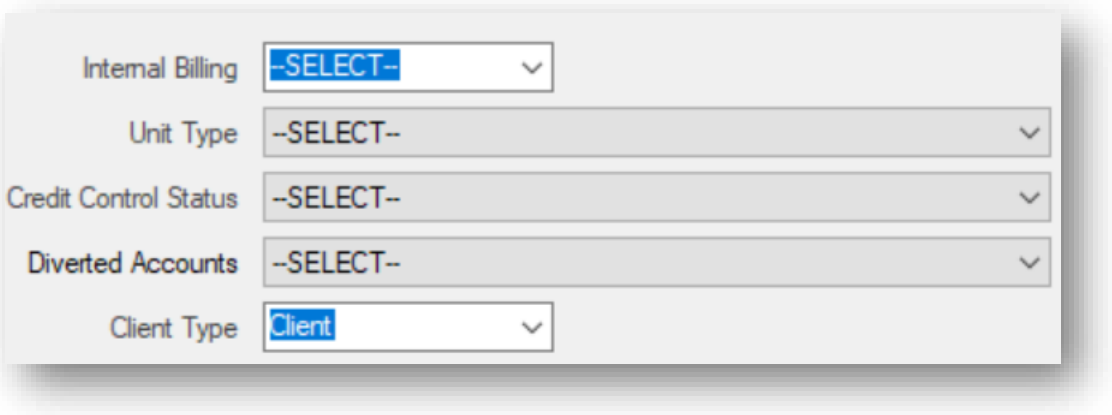
The **From Date** is only useful if you have a transactional style reminder in the form of a statement. In this case, the date entered here will be used as a start date for the transactions to be shown on the reminder. If a balance exists prior to the entered "from date" a Balance brought forward will be shown. If the Client Notice you wish to run is linked to any invoice from a particular date then you can choose that as the **From Date**. You can leave the **From Date** blank if you just want to show all transactions but this could be lengthy depending on the amount of time Clients have been in properties. If the Notice Type being run is a letter and not transactional this field will have no effect.

The **Run As Date** will change the date used to calculate the client grace period. You can leave this blank if you would like to use today's date. It is also useful to note that you can set the **Run As Date** to be in the future. This option can be used to bypass the grace period you have set for your clients and allows you to run your Notices as if this were a future date. For instance, on a Friday you might set the date for the coming Monday.

Using the **From Development** and **To Development** allows you to be more specific in your organisation of the process you would like to run to search for Clients.



On the right-hand side of this screen you will find various additional filters for you to set. These will allow you to be more specific about which Clients you would like to run your Report for. These are all optional filters and can be left at their default **Select** option if they are not relevant:



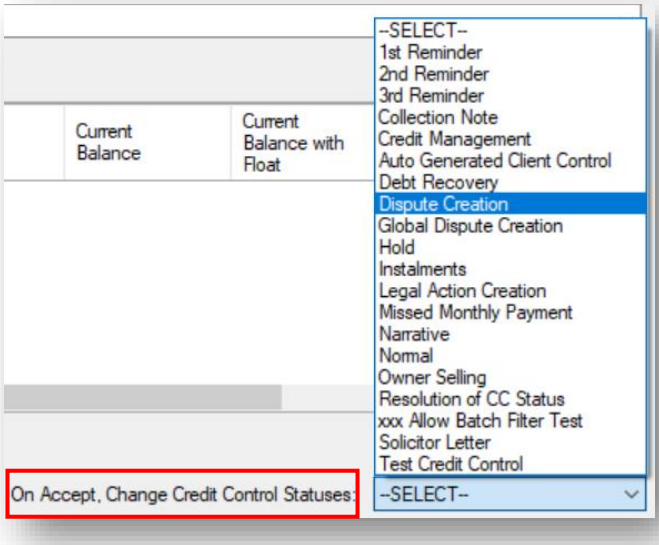
Internal Billing will allow you to choose **Yes** and only select Clients who have their Client Address set to **Internal**. Choosing **No** will select all Clients who don't have their Client Address set to Internal and leaving the drop-down at **Select** will bring in all Clients irrespective of their Internal Billing setting. This is historically used for businesses who, in addition to factoring a building, also deal with letting a property in the building on behalf of the owner. In this case, the letters would effectively be going to a different department in the same building.

Unit Type can be entered when setting up a Client account. The term Unit Type refers to the type of property the client account is held for. Selecting "flat" or "house" would allow you to only run Client Notices for the specified Unit Type. Please note that you can add more **Unit Types** in the System Settings if required.

If you select any of the **Credit Control Status** options then you will be able to run the Report on Clients from only one of those Credit Control Statuses. If you leave this on **Select** then it will ignore the existing status of your Clients and run the Report for all who fit the remainder of the criteria.

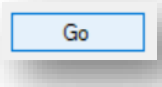
You also have the opportunity to include or exclude accounts that have their Development set to **Divert**.

The **Client Type** option will usually be left at **Client** unless you have other arrangements in place. Client Types are another way of filtering out Clients you do not wish to bill. Client Type refers to whether the Client is set to a Developer or not. You can set the Client Type by using the Developer check box on the Client screen. This allows you to not charge management fees to Developers if this is your arrangement with them.

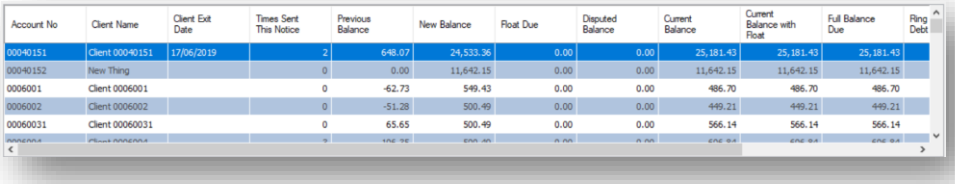


You should choose an option from the drop-down list **On Accept, Change Credit Control Statuses** in order to have your client credit control statuses appear correctly on their accounts in other areas of CPL. This is a personal preference as the system will control internally when the next reminder is due and is not based on the credit control status set for a client but this could affect any Client Notices you run in the future.

If you have set all the filters you wish to apply, click the **Go** button on the right-hand side of the screen.



This will now search the database for any Clients who meet your criteria in the filters you have set. These Clients will have an outstanding balance above the minimum you entered and are therefore due a reminder. Once the search is completed the system will display a list of these clients in the grid.



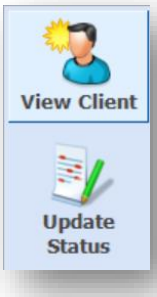
POSSIBLE REASONS FOR CLIENTS NOT APPEARING ON THE LIST

Clients may fail to appear in the returned list for the following reasons:

- They may have a Credit Control Status set which would exclude them from the credit control process. This status would either have been set in system settings under each credit control status or they have been part of a previous Client Notice process and had their status updated.
- Their last invoice date is not within the time period set for the Notice Type being run. For example, Reminder 1 is set to 14 days, the date of the invoice is the 1st March and you are running the reminders on the 13th March. The client will not appear until the 14th of March. You could still run them that day by using the **Run As** date noted above.

VIEWING CLIENTS AND UPDATING STATUS

If you click to highlight a client in the grid, there are further options available to you in the **Action Panels**.

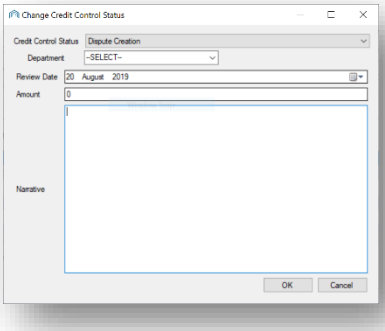


In the **Action Panel** on the left of your screen, you can click on **View Client** or **Update Status** to investigate or make changes to the status of an individual Client you have highlighted in the grid.

Clicking on **View Client** opens the **Client Account** page which allows you to inspect their information held in CPL.

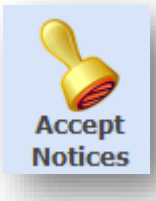
CHANGE CREDIT CONTROL STATUS

Clicking on **Update Status** whilst you have a client highlighted in the grid will open the **Change Credit Control Status** window. This will allow you to update the individual Credit Control Status of this Client without sending any letters about an amount owed. For instance, if you needed to put an amount into Dispute, this screen will allow you to do this before you run any letters.

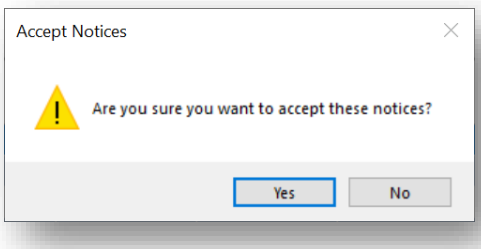


ACCEPTING NOTICES

Clicking **Accept Notices**, in the **Action Panel** across the bottom of the screen will raise Client Notices against the selected Clients and will also post any late payment fees if applicable to that Client Notice type.



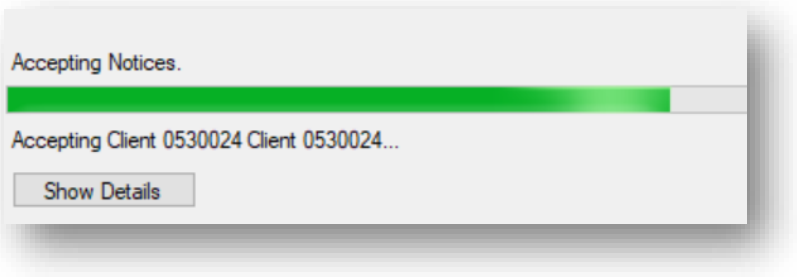
A window will open asking, **Are you sure you want to accept these notices?**



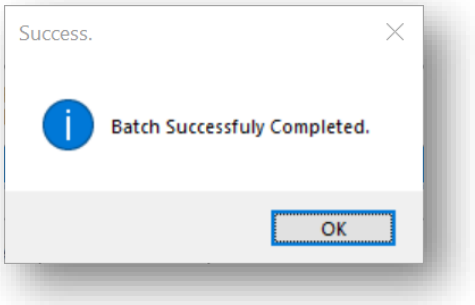
If you choose **Yes**, this will run a process which will accept the **Notice Type** you have set and update the **Client Credit Control Statuses** for all Clients in that grid.

Please note this will only update **Client Credit Control Statuses** if you picked a specific Credit Control Status on the **On Accept, Change Credit Control Statuses** drop-down option earlier.

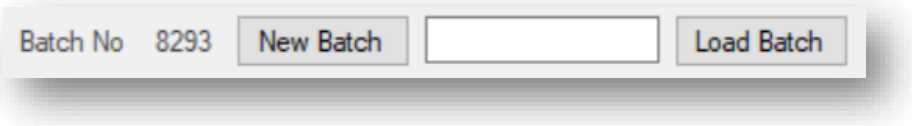
You should choose an option from the drop-down list **On Accept, Change Credit Control Statuses** in order to have your client credit control statuses appear correctly on their accounts in other areas of CPL.



When it reaches the end of the process a window will appear telling you that the **Batch Successfully Completed.**



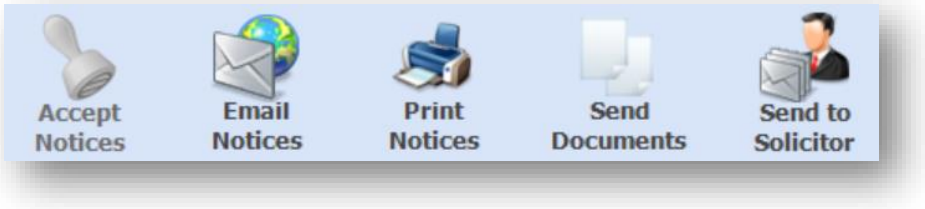
You will notice that it has created a batch number for you. This will be displayed on the left-hand side of the screen above the grid.



These batch numbers represent the batch of Notices that you have just run. We have the option to **Load Batch** (from an existing batch number) and we have the option to create a **New Batch.** As long as you have a batch number you can reprint from this screen simply by loading the batch and selecting the correct print option.

DISTRIBUTING NOTICES

If you look again at the **Action Panel** at the bottom of the screen you will notice that after clicking on the **Accept Notices** icon and running the batch process the other icons have become available and the **Accept Notices** icon is now greyed out:

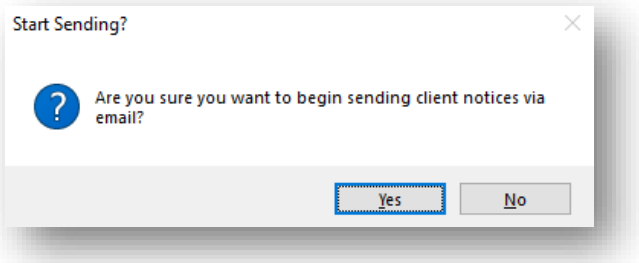


You are now able to select the correct option for your requirements.

This section is governed by a System Setting that will be set to either allow you access to **Send Documents** (using Mail Merge templates), **Email Notices** and **Print Notices** (using Custom Notice templates) or in some case can be set to allow you access to both.

USING THE EMAIL NOTICES OPTION

You can choose to email Custom Notices out to your Clients if you have this feature already set up in CPL. Please note, this will also be dependent on each Client having an email address set up in your Client Account window.

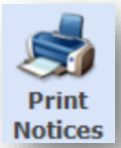


After you click on **Yes**, the system will then generate the emails for you to check. Once you are happy with these it will give you the option to send them.

If you require a Custom Notice to be created for you, CPL would be happy to help, however, there may be a charge involved. Please contact Support for a quote.

USING THE PRINT NOTICES OPTION

If you have a **Custom Notice** set up in the system, click the **Print Notices** icon.



This will generate a preview of the Custom Notices documents for these Clients in a separate window.

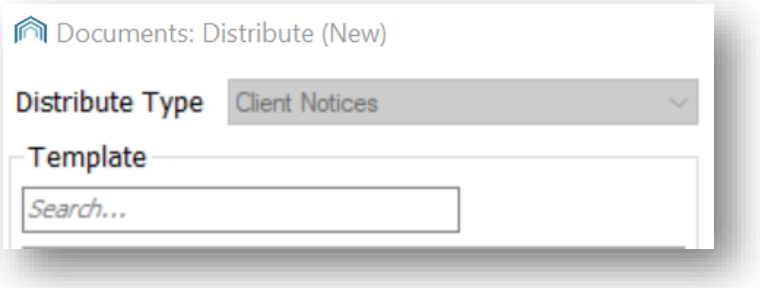
On the menu bar at the top of the screen you can use the arrows (highlighted) to page through each Notice which will allow you to check them. Once you are happy with these Notices you can use the print icon in the menu bar to print them.

If you require a Custom Notice to be created for you, CPL would be happy to help, however, there may be a charge involved. Please contact Support for a quote.

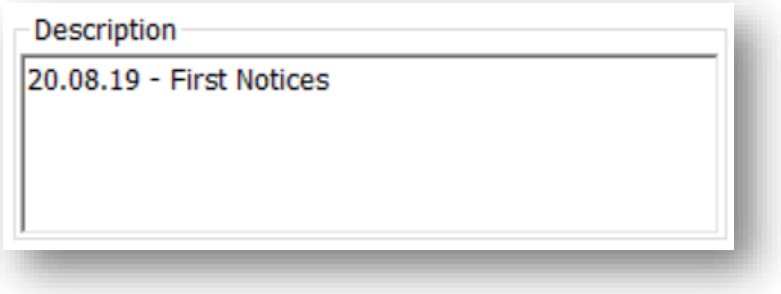
USING THE SEND DOCUMENTS OPTION

If you do not have a Custom Notice set up in the system, you can click the **Send Documents** icon.

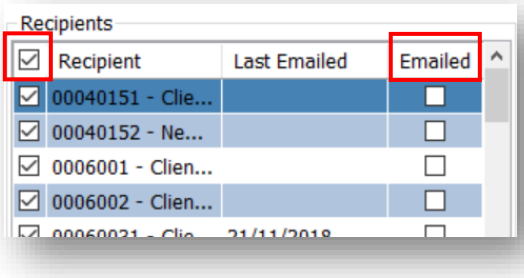
The **Documents: Distribute (New)** window will open. If it is set up in the system your **Client Notices** mail merge template will already be selected.



Enter a suitable description in the Description box, for example, **[the date] – First Notices**.

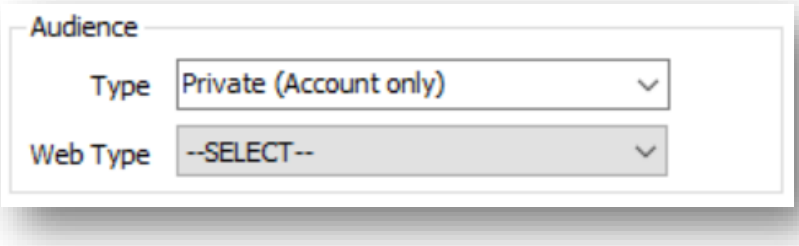


On the right-hand side of the page you will see the list of **Recipients**. These are your clients found by running the process on the previous screen. You can select all of these Recipients by ticking the checkbox at the top of the list or tick to select individual Clients:



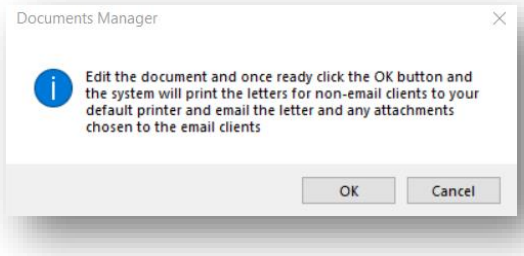
If your Clients have opted for email correspondence, you will see a tick in the box in the column on the right-hand side of the Recipients list.

There is an **Audience** section at the left-hand side of the screen. If you have not subscribed to a Client Portal and Client App with CPL, then please leave these set to **Type: Private (Account only)** and **Web Type: –Select—**



In order to generate the mail merges so that you can check them before you send them out to clients (this will be your last chance to change anything in the letter) click the **Print/Send** button:

The system will now open **Word** for you and display your merged results. Check the information is correct and click **OK** in the pop-up window which appears, without closing Word.

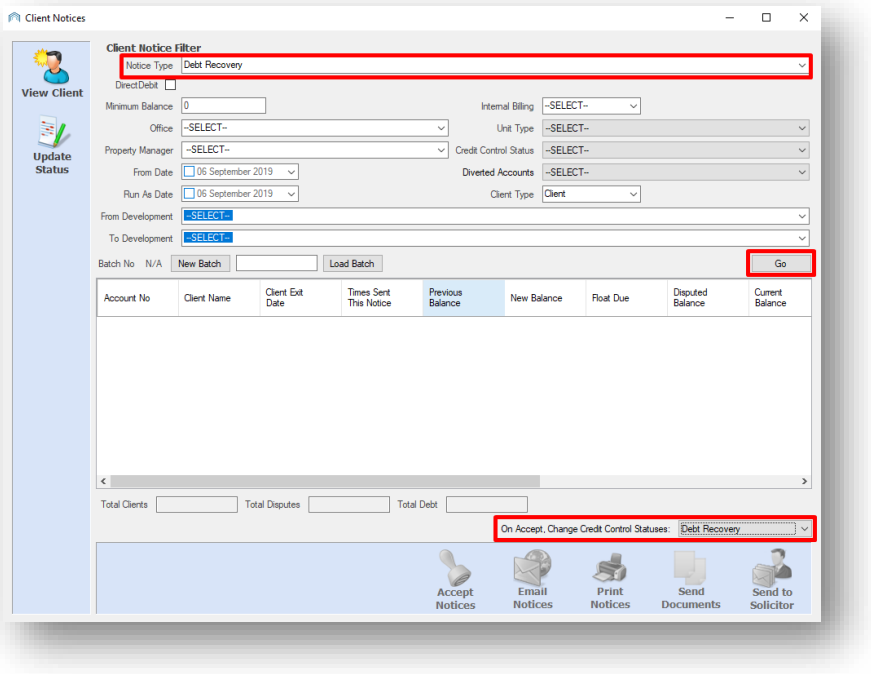


If these mail merge results meet your requirements, accept them and CPL will then print/email your mail merges to the clients involved.

USING THE SEND TO SOLICITORS OPTION

Sometimes your clients will be unable or unwilling to pay. At this point you will need to process the accounts for debt recovery. This is also done from the Client Notices screen. It is possible to provide your solicitor with a copy of the Notices you are sending out to your Clients.

Make sure you have first processed your notices as normal, either as a Custom Notice or as a mail merge (as discussed above) in order to inform your Clients by issuing them with the Notices. You will want to make sure that you have chosen **Debt Recovery** in both the **Notice Type** filter and that you have set the drop-down list **On Accept, Change Credit Control Statuses** to **Debt Recovery**.



Enter all details into the other filter fields as required and click on **Go**.

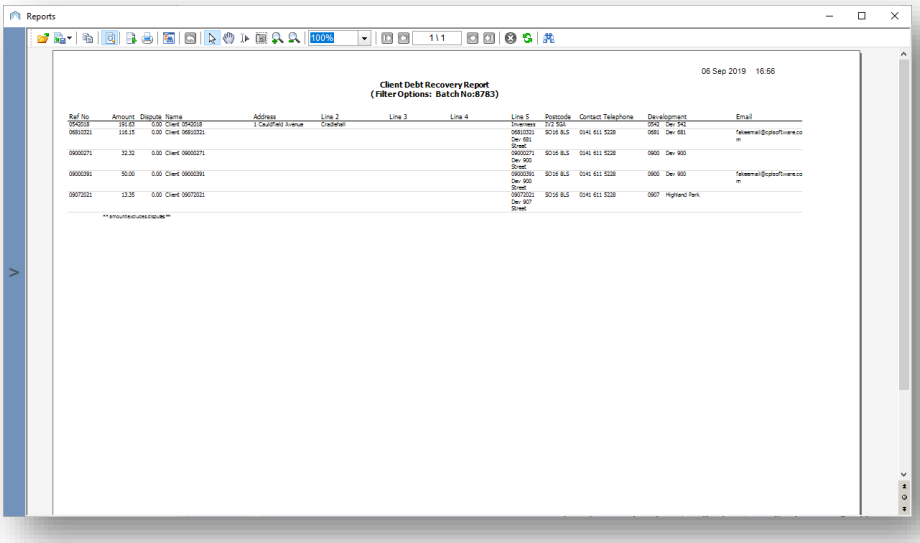
Once you have clicked on **Accept** you will be able to see that the last icon is available in the bottom action bar called **Send to Solicitor**.

This allows you to send a copy of all the Client Notices in this batch to your solicitor.

Click on the **Send to Solicitor** icon. A pop-up box will ask you to confirm you wish to send the notices to your Solicitor. Your solicitor will receive individual copies of all the Client Notices.

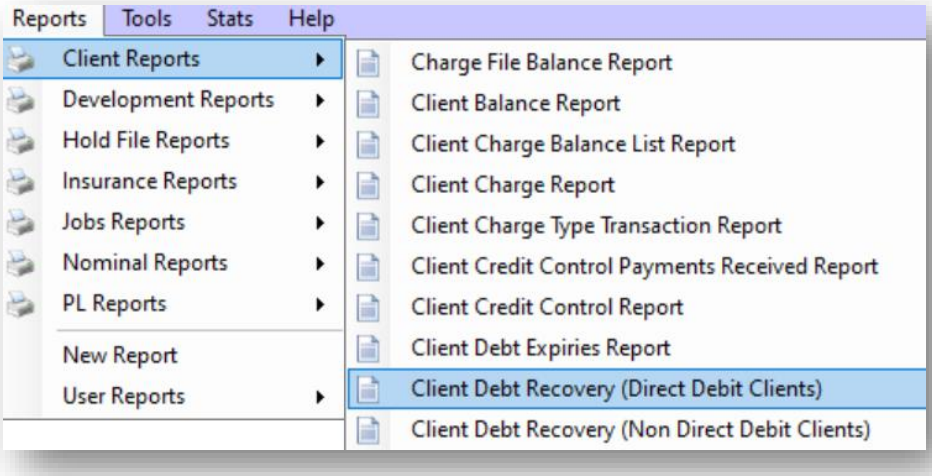
GENERATING A CLIENT DEBT RECOVERY REPORT

The Client Notices screen can also generate a Client Debt Recovery Report. In order for this to happen specific settings have to be updated by CPL Support in your version of CPL in order to permit you to run Custom Reports. Ensure you have chosen **Debt Recovery** in both the **Notice Type** filter and that you have set the drop-down list **On Accept, Change Credit Control Statuses** to **Debt Recovery** and you will be able to run your debt recovery as above. Upon completion of Accepting the Notices click on **Print Client Notices** which will generate a report including information on all Clients of that status in one document like the example below.



ALTERNATIVE DEBT RECOVERY REPORTS IN THE REPORTS

Alternatively, there are two Debt Recovery Reports available via the Client Reports Menu in CPL:



There is a Report for Direct Debit Clients and Non Direct Debit Clients.

CPL KNOWLEDGE BASE

This training guide forms part of CPL's Knowledge Base which is available for all CPL users at https://contact.cplsoftware.com/portal/home

The CPL Knowledge Base will be continually updated with additional guides and information. If you have any questions or suggestions for further guides we'd be happy to hear from you. You can contact CPL Support by emailing us at support@cplsoftware.com or through our portal at https://contact.cplsoftware.com/portal/home or calling us on 0345 646 0240 (option 1).

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