

CHICS User Group Eggstra

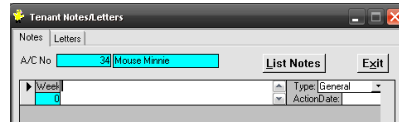


Spring Edition 2009

Next you enter a date in the 'Action Date' box.

YEAR END BUG

Colin Boyd



If you leave this rent account as it is now, CHICS will remind you of this note only when you look at this tenant's record.

What we want is for CHICS to remind us of every 'action date' notes logged in the system as soon as we run CHICS. To do this open the 'Exception Report' window (from the Reports and Printing menu) and on the "Action dates – Tenant" row change the 'Wks before' number from 0 to the number of weeks before the event date you wish to be reminded (e.g. 2) and then change the No under the Popup column to Yes.



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CHICS Programme - Expert Features

Pop up reminders

Carlos Lozada



There is a useful reminder feature, which will pop up a window whenever you log onto CHICS.

For example, let's say you want to have a reminder that a tenant will move out of a property sometime in the future. To do this you go to the tenant's rent account click on the 'Notes & Letters' button, type a description on your note and on the 'Type' of note select 'pop-up'.

Report Item	Report Title	Wks before	Wks after	Popup Y/N
Prop date 1		0	0	No
Prop Date 2		0	0	No
NTG Date		0	0	No
Action dates - Tenant		2	0	Yes
Action dates - Dwelling		0	0	No
Benefit Review		0	0	No
Gas Service		0	0	No

Now every time the system is run in the week containing the action date CHICS will display an 'Exception Report' on the screen.

If the persistent pop up notes become too annoying, go to the respective tenant's account, click on the Notes button and change the notes type setting from 'popup' to 'General' and they will stop popping up.

Alternatively, there is a 'Pop-Up' option on the Global Settings screen, which will switch on and off the pop-up feature throughout the CHICS system.

As usual, if you have any questions on this or any part of CHICS systems give us a ring.

We have a known problem, which crept into our code and may affect some rent users Year End. If your rent ledger year is April to March, please check your 'version' from CHICS Top-Line Menu – Help, About CHICS Systems. There is a number in brackets after Version9. If this reads (011108), (011208) or (010109) you could be affected, and will need an update from our site. If you aren't confident about getting this on board yourself, please ring here and we can take you through the 5-minute process.

Hello and Goodbye (almost)

Debbie Fletcher



Firstly the Hello. I expect by now some of you will have heard a new voice on the telephone when calling us here at CHICS. Deborah Thorpe joined us in January to fill the gap that Colin will make when he reduces his hours in April. Deborah has had significant experience in the wonderful world of IT and has experience in a support capacity too. Deborah will be saying her very own hello later in the newsletter. So to the goodbye (well almost). Though Gill is still a valuable member of the board of Directors, she is no longer on the CHICS payroll but will still be doing a little freelance work for us on our website when it's needed. So its

not quite goodbye to Gill. Gill leaving (almost) means a bit of a reshuffle of workloads. Our accountant Rosy will now take over the organisation of our budgets, I'll be taking over the personnel side of things and Deborah will take over the New Enquiries system. As to the 101 other tasks that Gill did we'll be allocating those as they arise. So Au revoir to Gill (though we'll still see/hear from her often) and Bonjour to Deborah.

CHICS 9 – Challenges - no problemo.

Colin Boyd



As always, we have issues which affect a few users which don't interfere with day-to-day work, but can take some time to finally resolve. Two examples below, show how we approach and solve these issues with your help. One win and one still in play.

SUCCESS - CHICS9 with Access 2003

We struggled with this for some time. If you have Access installed on your computer, and it is Office 2003 version (check from Top-Line Menu – About), there can be a problem installing CHICS9 to run alongside. The answer is to not use the installation disk, but rather do a straightforward manual setup and run directly as an Access application. We now have a document on the installation CD that describes this, or we can talk you through over the phone in about 10 minutes.

JURY OUT - VISTA – Compact/Repair

We're not sure how much of a problem this is. The symptom is a failure to locate data after Compact/Repair and it involves the ridiculously complicated security settings in VISTA.

We have already recovered from one of these, but will need another

to check the robustness of our approach, and will be very pleased to hear from anyone that encounters this as we can test other possible new answers.

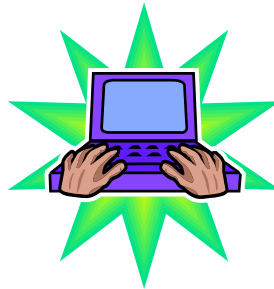
YOUR CO-OPERATION – If either of the two issues above affect your installation please get back to discuss and hopefully sort. It is only with your feedback that we can maintain CHICS usefulness and reliability.

Email this paper – Debs keeping list

If you would like to receive a separate copy of this Newsletter to your email, please email us at Debbie@chics.co.uk.

NROSH

Mark Prichard



We have a link on our website in the Usergroup section under NROSH which, via a redirection, will take you to the relevant Government pages. We did produce an NROSH tool that used an export from CHICS (v8 and v9). However, due to changes in the required information from the government, we have decided to move onto the upcoming version of CHICS (named CHICS X). CHICS X will import the data it requires directly from your current Chics data, and can then produce the required NROSH files for submission when required. This will also give many of you a first look at CHICS X. We are currently ploughing through the NROSH guidelines of what data is required. Your Properties and any NROSH data you have entered will be imported. (We plan to extend this import to include Tenants, Accounts etc. as time goes by.)

By all means continue to use the NROSH screen from the current Properties screen, as CHICS X will translate this data (as far as possible) into the new standard.

On the latest update - Electronic Document Management

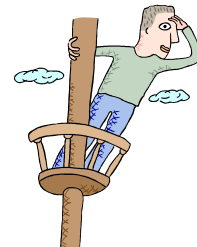
Colin Boyd



This new feature helps you keep tenant correspondence organised. From 'Rent Screen' open 'Free Text' (Pencil on toolbar). This pad, as most of you will know, is for notes relating to the tenant. We now have a further link, accessed by the 'Tenant Documents' button which takes you to a folder for that tenant and can be used to store any correspondence or other documents (e.g. Tenancy Agreements). CHICS helps keep you organised. There is also a similar 'Property' folder which you can use to store property documentation and photos, however this is only available with Stock Condition module at present.

The year ahead

Colin Boyd



The struggle with Vista will continue. At this stage our advice has to be 'Don't do it!'. Microsoft's next offering is Windows 7, due to replace the ill-fated Vista late this year. I'm not hopeful they will have addressed the silly permissions issues which have obstructed and annoy Vista users – we'll see. The coming year will see the final introduction of NROSH. As also in this newsletter we've been working hard on this alongside our new rent ledger. Keep an eye out for our special 'CHICS NROSH Training Day' later in the year. Soon you'll be getting our 2009/10 price list. We've raised our charges so that your increases should be less than 3%. Ireland charges are

pegged to reflect strengthening of Euro. As usual we're happy to report that the costs of CHICS remain a fraction of other less useful systems.

You'll also be pleased to hear that your contributions are being spent wisely to continue providing top quality systems, support and tools like NROSH.

Finally, we expect to be continuing to attract steady new custom - the launch of the free version of CHICS X on our website will raise a lot of interest.

Whatever arises, you can be assured the newly configured CHICS team will be standing by to provide the usual high quality of service.

All the best to all our customers, Colin, Gill, Mark, Carlos, Debbie and Deborah.

Hello from Deborah

Deborah Thorpe



Hello, my name is Deborah Thorpe and I'm new to CHICS. I joined back in January to help Colin and Mark with client support and programming of the new CHICSX. I'm originally from the north of the country, but have lived in the south for many years now. Presently I live in Somerset having previously moved from Brighton. I now live in a small village outside Taunton with my partner and my cat in a lovely home overlooking the Blackdown hills with a large garden where I'm practicing my newly learnt permaculture principles (low maintenance, no dig gardening). When I'm not working for CHICS, my time is divided between studying some more A 'levels' at college; participating in transition town initiatives or learning traditional skills like spinning and weaving. And if there's any time left you'll find me kayaking down a river or surfing on the sea. Look forward to speaking with you all sometime.

Tips from the Devon dog

Why don't you tell me what you'd like to see in our newsletters? I'd love to hear from you. Email me at devondog@chics.co.uk



If you wish to contribute then you can call 01297 443511 or e-mail info@chics.co.uk. The newsletter can be used to pass on any information which you may think will be of use to other CHICS users, and if you want you can always advertise employment vacancies within the newsletter for free.

Colin Boyd, Director

Software development, software support & overall CHICS co-ordinator

Mark Prichard, Director Programmer

Gill Pettitt, Director Website management

Carlos Lozada, Training and Sales

Debbie Fletcher, Administrator, Personnel

Deborah Thorpe, Assistant Programmer, Client support