

Insider

July 2017

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Fergus Lyons
Managing Director

There seems to be a popular view that things quiet down a little for investment platforms after tax year end, but it never seems to work out like that for us. Far from sitting back and enjoying a lazy summer, we are busier than ever, working on a variety of different enhancements and dealing with the challenges that come with continued growth. In amongst this we have made two important new appointments in recent weeks. Gary Dale has joined us in the role of Sales Director at AJ Bell Investcentre, and Peter Hopkins is AJ Bell's new Technical Director. You can read more about them both in this edition of Insider.

Adviser survey

I regularly point out that the majority of new enhancements to the platform are as a result of client and adviser feedback. One of the main methods of collecting adviser feedback is our annual adviser survey, and your responses in previous years have played a huge

part in AJ Bell Investcentre's evolution to date. We are determined to keep that momentum going.

It only takes a few minutes to [complete the survey](#), and as a 'thank you' for taking part, you could win a case of wine in our free prize draw.

The survey closes on 29 September 2017, and the prize draw will be held on 3 October 2017. Please read the [terms and conditions](#) for more information.

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Digital Strategy

Thank you for the response we received on BETA version 1 - my team has been busy reviewing and implementing your feedback, as well as advancing new functionality ready for the release of BETA version 2. In anticipation of the release, we're currently performing testing to ensure that the new functionality behaves intuitively.

In light of your comments on navigation, client filtering, permission levels and reporting, the interface has been updated and some initial bugs have been fixed. You will also find that there are new investments screens (which include platform-level summaries of assets held in the Funds & Shares Service), and we have improved the way permissions are managed for all registered advisers.

Please note that each BETA release is a work-in-progress, so changes will continue to be made until the final version is released.

BETA version 2 will include an enhanced new business application process – a simplified and more user-friendly experience with improved verification processes and an integrated capability to initiate transfers.

Straight through cash transfer processing will mean that transferring schemes with ORIGO messaging capability can initiate and complete transfers online without any need for manual inputs, and a simple-to-use tracking tool will allow you to easily monitor the progress of outstanding transfers.

“ Thank you for the response we received on BETA version 1 – my team has been busy reviewing and implementing your feedback, as well as advancing new functionality ready for the release of BETA version 2. ”

Testing on the new secure customer area is also near completion and ready for release.

The new customer area will make it easier for your clients to get valuations and up-to-date information on their accounts, and will enable you to customise the colours of the client-facing areas of the website to match your corporate identity. To complete the branding experience, you will also be able to link in your logo, which will carry through to any reports generated.

In due course we will include functionality that will allow you to set up clients so they can deal on an execution-only basis within their SIPP, and there will eventually be a client mobile app with execution-only capability too.

Beware of fraudsters

We keep hearing about new techniques that fraudsters are using to trick people out of their money, and it's a problem that we all need to work together to overcome. One important point to remember in this regard is that AJ Bell Investcentre will only ever email clients using the email domains [@ajbell.co.uk](mailto:ajbell.co.uk) and [@investcentre.co.uk](mailto:investcentre.co.uk). So, if any of your clients receives an email from an address that differs at all from this (e.g. ajbell.co.uk), please ask them to get in touch with us so we can investigate further. Secondly, please bear in mind that clients will never be asked to alter payment instructions due to a change of account details at our end.

“ AJ Bell Investcentre will only ever email clients using the email domains [@ajbell.co.uk](mailto:ajbell.co.uk) and [@investcentre.co.uk](mailto:investcentre.co.uk). ”

I strongly encourage you to have a look at our [fraud awareness guide](#), which contains some excellent tips on how to keep safe.

Welcome aboard, Gary and Peter!

I am pleased to say that we have recruited two key new members to the AJ Bell team.

Peter Hopkins joins us as Technical Director, having previously worked at the Department for Work and Pensions and HMRC, where he led the pension simplification project that gave rise to A-Day. In his new role, Peter will oversee our Technical Resources team and help us build on our lobbying activity with regulatory and government bodies. His expertise is second to none and I know Andy Bell is especially pleased to have him on the team, having experienced his talents first hand during many a tricky negotiation on technical pension-related issues!

I am also delighted to welcome Gary Dale, who joins us as Sales Director for AJ Bell Investcentre. Gary's thorough understanding of the way advisers are using packaged investment solutions right now will be invaluable as we look to build on the success we have experienced in recent years. Gary will report to me and work alongside our Business Development Director, Malcolm Gordon, who has decided to take a slight step back in the business for personal reasons.

It is a real coup for us to attract two such well respected people, and I'm sure they will bring even greater strength and depth to our team.

AJ Bell On the Road again

Following the success of previous [AJ Bell On the Road](#) tours, we will once again be bringing our insight to advisers across the UK.

Our tour bus will roll into Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, London and Bristol between 18 and 22 September this year. On board will be our Head of Platform Technical, Mike Morrison, who will take a look at the recent 'Retirement Outcomes Review - Interim Report' as well as key points relating to defined benefit transfers. Lisa Webster, Technical Resources Consultant, will also be there, presenting on the latest technical issues affecting pensions, and the one and only Russ Mould will be looking at what the markets may have in store for 2018 and beyond. Finally, you will also get to

hear from our Head of Fund Selection, Ryan Hughes, as he looks at the process of selecting fund managers and asks, 'is it an art or a science?'

You can find much more information about each seminar and register for a place at www.investcentre.co.uk/ontheroad. Certificates for 2 hours and 15 minutes of CPD will be provided by email at

the end of the week, once all sessions have concluded.

If you are interested in joining us at one of the locations I would advise you to reserve a seat as soon as possible - if previous events are anything to go by, demand will be high!

Monthly service performance

To give you a flavour of our service delivery and how we are performing, our typical turnaround times for a number of key service areas are outlined below. We will update this in each issue and flag any hotspots which may occur, particularly in the lead-up to peak periods.

The information below is not provided as a formal measure of our service levels, but rather to give you a general flavour of how our Customer Services Team is currently performing. Looking across all of the areas listed below, we are hitting the indicative timescales provided in 87% of cases.



Key contacts

Adviser Support Team

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Business Development Team

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