



Why this family run firm remains loyal to BrightPay

Case Study



Four years on, here's why Fernhill Accountants are still glad they chose BrightPay

Fernhill Accountants are a family run accountancy firm located in Farnborough, Hampshire and have been in business since 2013. When they first started off, owner Judy Dean looked after the accountancy and taxation side of the business while her daughter Lucy later joined to take care of marketing and customer service.

Fernhill Accountants' clients are mostly micro businesses, and they have a mix of sole traders and limited companies. One of Fernhill Accountants' first clients was a Community Interest Company (CIC), and they now have quite a few clients who are CICs. Fernhill Accountants offer bookkeeping, accounting, taxation and payroll services to their clients.

“ I run the payroll for some clients; some clients run their own. And they use BrightPay because I've introduced them to it. ”



Judy Dean of Fernhill Accountants

Challenge:



- As Fernhill Accountants grew and their payroll clients' needs evolved, HMRC's Basic PAYE Tools couldn't keep up. There was too much manual work involved with tasks such as pensions and auto enrolment.
- Processing payroll was taking too long and wasn't a profitable service to offer.
- Judy wanted her practice to continue to offer payroll as a service to her clients but also needed to make it worth her while.
- It was important to Judy that she could find a payroll software that was cost effective while also offering telephone support.

Solution:



- A payroll software that offered full pension and auto enrolment functionality, cutting out any manual work.
- A payroll software that offered telephone support at no extra cost.
- A payroll software which automates tasks, meaning it saves time and makes offering payroll as a service more profitable.
- A payroll software that has regular updates to cater for changes in payroll legislation and is continually adding new features to make payroll processing quicker and easier.

Result:



- Fernhill Accountants now make more money from processing payroll.
- By saving time processing payroll, Judy now has more time to spend on other parts of the business.
- Fernhill Accountants' payroll clients are loyal as they know that their payroll needs will be met.
- Judy doesn't need to worry about changes in payroll legislation because she knows her payroll software will cater for it.

A software that grows with the business

Fernhill Accountants didn't initially offer payroll services to their clients but when one of their CIC clients asked if they would do it, they agreed. As they were not sure if the payroll side of their business would work out and because it was free, they started off by using HMRC's Basic PAYE Tools. However, using Basic PAYE Tools to process payroll was time consuming and because the functionality was so limited, tasks such as auto enrolment were taking forever.

"The functionality just wasn't there. And with the pensions auto enrolment coming in, it was all taking too long," This is when Judy decided she needed to start looking for a payroll software that would meet all of their requirements.

The importance of telephone support

Judy began researching the different payroll software available. This is when she first became aware of [BrightPay](#). After looking into the various features of BrightPay and weighing the benefits up against other payroll systems, Judy felt confident that BrightPay could take care of her payroll needs. Reading BrightPay's reviews on AccountingWEB reaffirmed her decision.

Another payroll software provider which had been mentioned to Judy and which she had considered was Moneysoft. However, what helped her make the final decision was the fact that Moneysoft didn't provide any phone support at that time, while BrightPay did. "One of the big reasons we went with BrightPay in the end was because you have [telephone support](#)," Judy told us. Judy preferred speaking directly to a payroll specialist, because from experience, phone support often solved problems quicker than email. And so, happy with all the information she gathered, Judy made the final decision and started using BrightPay for the 2017/18 tax year.

Time saved through integrations

Since Judy started using BrightPay to process payroll she hasn't looked back. Straight away Judy noticed how quick and easy BrightPay was to use.

“ Everything runs smoothly. So I actually make more money from payroll than I did before. To be still using the same payroll software over four years later I think speaks for itself. ”

BrightPay includes direct API integration with a number of [accounting packages](#). For Judy, BrightPay's integration with accounting software [Xero](#) was important to have. "The integration with Xero has been great. It has saved me a lot of time. Thanks to the integration I can just send it over and adjust it if I need to – it's so easy. I've also quite a few clients on BrightPay and Xero and it just flows through quite happily."

Another integration which has saved Judy time is BrightPay's [integration with a number of pension providers](#), in particular, Nest. "We've clients who are on Nest and once we got through the initial set up it was very easy. It works out everything for you and the clients just pay them what they're meant to pay and that's it, job done," she said. "The nudges the software gives you all the time to remind you what you need to do for auto enrolment have been great. So yes, it works brilliantly; it's secure and saves us so much time."



BrightPay's cloud add-on saves more time by cutting down on emails

Fernhill Accountants are also using the optional cloud add-on, [BrightPay Connect](#). They didn't initially use BrightPay Connect until Judy heard about the pricing structure where you only pay for what you use. "As soon as I heard that, I signed up. It's very reasonably priced," Judy said.

One of the ways Judy has saved time using BrightPay Connect is by giving clients access to an [online dashboard](#) where they can run payroll reports anytime, anywhere. "It's more secure and saves me from having to email clients and add in the attachments. Everything the client needs is there. I don't have to worry about making mistakes or not attaching the right report."

"Before, when I had to save the reports and then go and find them and attach them to the emails it was taking me about 15 minutes per client each time. So now that we have BrightPay Connect we don't need to do that anymore. It cuts out a lot of emails that would come in as well. The time saving is immense for me."

BrightPay Connect's automatic online backup has also saved Judy time when processing payroll. "An additional benefit of BrightPay Connect is that your payroll data is automatically backed up in the cloud so we no longer have to back it up manually."



**15 mins per
client saved
on sharing
reports**

Speaking to someone gets problems solved quicker

Another feature of BrightPay that has been very important for Judy and Fernhill Accountants is the level of assistance she receives from the support team. As mentioned, it is important for Judy that she gets to speak to someone over the phone whenever she needs help. "The support is excellent. Both email and phone. It's great to be able to speak to a real person because when you're not sure about what you're doing, you don't always explain it very well in an email. So, I find when I'm unsure about something when running payroll and I speak to [BrightPay's support](#) team, they can kind of prise out of me what it is I'm doing or not doing and the issue gets solved a lot quicker."

“The online video tutorials and support documentation are great too when I need step-by-step instructions on how to do certain tasks. I find the webinars very useful. During the pandemic they had lots of useful information; and on the website as well.”

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So, after four years of Fernhill Accountants using BrightPay to process payroll for their clients we asked Judy if she would be renewing her BrightPay licence next year. "Definitely, without a doubt," Judy answered without hesitation. "When I first made the decision to use BrightPay I was hopeful that I wouldn't be dissatisfied in any way, and I can honestly say I haven't."



Why not see for yourself?

If you want to find out exactly why Judy hasn't looked back since making the move to BrightPay, schedule a free [15-minute demo](#) of BrightPay and BrightPay Connect with a member of our team today.

Or why not book a [free 60-day trial](#) of BrightPay and try the software for yourself with no obligations.

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