

## Success Story

# Sage gives the RSPCA paws for thought

The UK's leading animal welfare charity chose Sage X3 to deliver a flexible, future-proof business



At RSPCA headquarters in Horsham (Sussex, UK), people bring their dogs to the office while they work. "It's one of the great things about working here," says Helen Tracey, Chief Financial Officer for RSPCA, the UK's largest animal welfare charity. "As we're talking, I can see a golden retriever puppy sleeping under someone's desk."

Sage

#### Company

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)

#### Location

United Kingdom

#### Industry

Non-profit

#### Sage Products

Sage X3



#### About the RSPCA

The RSPCA is now one of the UK's largest charities, with an income of £140M and over 1,600 employees. The organisation investigates over 150,000 complaints of cruelty and neglect every year.



### **The challenge**

It's a nice insight into the RSPCA, a charity that was founded nearly 200 years ago, in 1824. Its ultimate aim remains the same—to promote kindness towards animals—however the founders would barely recognise today's organisation. The RSPCA is now one of the UK's largest charities, with an income of £140M and over 1,600 employees. It has a large network of regional offices, 30 animal homes, hospital and clinics, and a team of uniformed inspectors on the streets. The organisation investigates over 150,000 complaints of cruelty and neglect every year.

But the financial and administrative overheads have grown along with the organisation. As Helen explained, "Many of our processes, particularly in finance, had become outdated. Like many older charities, processes had evolved by default, not design, and there was a gap between what we were doing and current best practices. We also knew we needed to have greater clarity and leverage over our information. By shifting the finance team away from transactional processing to a review and analysis-type role, we knew we could really add value to the business.

### **The solution**

Introducing Sage software gives RSPCA's central teams the opportunity to do more for others, such as fulfill a more service-led function to the large branch network. In corporate and social responsibility (CSR) terms, the RSPCA could start to assist other smaller charities, particularly those working in the same arena. Improving processes and reducing admin frees people up to do all this, and more.

The RSPCA's vision is to live in a world where all animals are respected and treated with compassion. It works to: improve the welfare of pet animals, improve the lives and reduce the suffering of farm animals, and reduce the use and suffering of animals in experiments.

All of its income is raised through voluntary donations, legacies and memberships and fundraising with corporate partners.



Maximising donations with Sage X3.

### **Taking control**

“We needed a solution that would enable us to take control of the business and maximise our donations, so that they are focused on animal welfare and not on administration costs,” Helen said. “We also wanted a solution that had longevity. We’re very aware, sadly, that the need for our services is not going away any time soon.”

At the start of 2014, the Society went through a competitive tendering process. Helen explained: “We were keen to include Sage because they are the market leader—they had also provided our previous finance system. We then undertook a structured and controlled selection process, and it was pretty clear early on that we had found the right solution in Sage X3.”

Another critical element was the role that Sage partner, CPiO would play. Helen went on to say “We started working with CPiO some years ago and as a result they really understood our organisational goals and our aims for the end system. CPiO worked, and continue to work, very positively with the RSPCA, and were excellent at challenging some of its established processes—questioning the methods, so that they could get the most out of a modern business management solution.”

It was clear that Sage X3 met all of the RSPCA’s overarching objectives. “We wanted a plug-and-play solution, not bespoke—we wanted to configure, not customise—and it had to support best practices. We also wanted a cloud-based solution. As well as fitting in with our organisation’s ‘digital first’ approach, a cloud solution meant we don’t have to heavily invest in IT infrastructure,” Helen said. “Instead, we have put that money towards helping animals,” she added.

“The role of CPiO was again invaluable here. Following their lead, we created a collaborative project team made up of technical and business project managers and subject matter experts, who all worked together to make sure we got the right results.”

In addition to the core financial management modules for invoicing, payments and the usual checks and balances, the RSPCA chose to implement two additional modules. Sage X3 Intelligence gives intuitive real-time data reporting that makes it quick and easy to get relevant business insights (and ensures a consistent data view for everyone). And with eDocument Management, an electronic copy of an invoice can now be stored with a transaction, keeping everything together and removing the need for paper copies.



“Thanks to the cloud, RSPCA’s commercial teams can take Sage X3 anywhere—on any device.”

**Helen Tracey**

Chief Financial Officer for RSPCA

#### **The future**

There’s no doubt that the RSPCA is on a journey and that Sage and CPiO are long term partners. “We chose Sage X3 so we can have a solution that’s future-proof and will adapt with our needs,” Helen said. Phase two of the project is already underway, and this will see the cloud-based solution extended to cover the RSPCA’s fixed assets (including all its properties and vehicles) and procurement processes. As the RSPCA gears up to celebrating its 200 year anniversary, it’s clear it now has the right business tools to take it into its third century.



Sage

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