

## Success Story

# Groundwork lays the foundations for impact with Sage Intacct

Groundwork South and North Tyneside are cultivating community change by using real-time reporting to maximise every pound.



### The challenge

Groundwork South and North Tyneside struggled with fragmented spreadsheets and slow budgeting for 100+ projects annually. Limited finance staff couldn't provide timely data to remote project managers, risking overspending and delayed decisions amid complex funding rules and hybrid work demands.



### The solution

Migrating from Sage 50 and Sage 200 to cloud-based Sage Intacct empowered managers with real-time financial access, integrated digital workflows, and detailed reporting. Features like dashboards, prepaid cards, and carbon data tracking streamlined processes and supported sustainability goals.



### Results with Sage Intacct

Faster, accurate reporting, granular budgeting linked to staff, and optimised fund allocation. Paperwork reduced dramatically, enabling staff to focus on impact. Over 100 projects benefit from live data, improved accountability, and transparency to funders.

- Over 100 projects managed annually with live Sage Intacct data.
- Project costs tracked down to individual employee level, aiding planning and retention.
- Admin time reduced via direct email uploads and centralised reporting.
- Digital receipts and prepaid cards replaced petty cash processes.

The Sage logo, consisting of the word "Sage" in a white, sans-serif font on a black background.

**Company**  
Groundwork  
South & North Tyneside

**Location**  
United Kingdom

**Industry**  
Non-profit

**Sage Products**  
Sage Intacct  
Sage HR



### About Groundwork South and North Tyneside:

Groundwork is a federation of charities made up of trusts like South and North Tyneside, who support and empower local residents to address social and environmental challenges.



### **‘Changing Places, Changing Lives’**

Groundwork South and North Tyneside has dedicated over 30 years to uplifting some of the most deprived communities in the region. Their mission of “Changing Places, Changing Lives” drives educational programmes, community centres, recycling projects, fuel poverty support, and services for young carers. Through a diverse range of initiatives, they produce meaningful, measurable improvements in the local environment and the lives of those who call it home.

Despite Groundwork’s inspiring mission, their passionate hardworking teams faced unnecessary challenges in their fragmented internal systems. As Natalie Cora, Director of Corporate Services, recalls, “We used to use a lot of spreadsheets, people were keeping their own data.”

Budgeting was scattered and required time-consuming manual comparisons, while crucial knowledge remained siloed: “When people left, they did so with the data in their head, or in their drawer. It was all over the place.”

The organisation’s impact depends entirely on the unwavering dedication of those delivering projects on the ground every day, a commitment made harder by inefficient systems. To better support these teams, they needed a single source of truth system that seamlessly aligned with how they work.

Andrew Watts, Groundwork South and North Tyneside CEO, explains, “Charities don’t have much unrestricted funds or reserves. Having systems that provide a clear overview of projects, and their performance is vital. Project management is our top priority.” This branch manages around 100 projects a year, each with complex budgets and diverse funding streams. Groundwork South and North Tyneside needed a system that gave every project team instant, remote access to the financial data they rely on.

They explored several solutions along the way: Sage 50 required people to come into the office to access information, and while Sage 200 offered more flexibility, it had limitations. Eventually, Groundwork found what they were looking for in Sage Intacct. It was the system that matched their ambitions, without demanding they compromise.

Like many organisations, some team members were hesitant to change at first. But by investing time in training and using the test site to build confidence, those nerves began to settle. Natalie describes the transition process as “really, really good,” and says it “took away a lot of their earlier nervousness,” helping the team move on from outdated processes and embrace a more capable, empowering way of working.



Sage Intacct empowers Groundwork to dig deep into data, turning insights into smarter decisions and greater community impact.

### **Plotting a better path for project power**

With Sage Intacct, Groundwork's teams no longer lose time hunting for answers. Today they can instantly access financial insights whenever and wherever they need them. Project managers monitor budgets, track diverse funding streams, and assess progress without waiting on finance teams or juggling several spreadsheets. "Now they can just jump on and get what they want," Natalie says. A shift to self-service access has helped remove roadblocks and keep momentum high.

That's because the system brings all the essentials together in one place. By uploading key project documents like funding agreements, budgets, reports, contracts, and communications directly into Sage Intacct, teams now operate from one centralised system. This supports seamless handovers and reinforces resilience across projects, improving continuity, so vital information no longer walks out the door when staff move on.

Sage Intacct brings budgeting and reporting into much sharper focus. Costs are now tracked down to the individual employee level, even those working across multiple projects, giving Groundwork a clear view of how funding is used, where it's going, and where it could go further. This visibility also supports smarter workforce planning. "I can run a report on a single person and instantly see how their time is covered across every project," says Natalie. "It really helps us plan progression for the team and make sure they're secure in their roles."

Sage Intacct brings a new level of granularity that helps Groundwork make the most of every penny, ensuring every project line is accurate, justifiable, and impactful. This is especially important given the complex range of financial requirements tied to varying income streams. "We've all got different funding regulations to follow," Natalie explains. "Now it's much easier to classify and keep them separate." With clearer oversight, the finance team can better support front-line delivery while also demonstrating value and accountability to donors, regulators, and partners.

The intuitive design behind Sage Intacct makes clarity accessible to everyone, not just finance experts. Natalie notes, "The whole interface is much more user-friendly. Service managers who aren't financially trained can navigate easily." Usability helped dissolve old silos between finance and delivery teams, creating a more cohesive and responsive way of working. Dashboards and checklists help teams stay focused without the need for constant oversight, freeing up capacity and allowing the team to invest more in what really matters: community events where they'll make a tangible difference.

With sharper visibility across the board, even supplier tracking and compliance are now more streamlined — which is vital in a sector where every penny counts. Being able to link budgets to suppliers has been, as Natalie puts it, "a game changer."



“Having instant information helps our staff deliver projects more effectively and make informed choices.”

**Andrew Watts**

CEO, Groundwork South and North Tyneside

**Pounds, people, and purpose aligned**

Administrative processes have become faster and far less manual. Invoices and correspondence now upload directly from email, eliminating the need for printing and scanning. Prepaid cards have replaced petty cash, giving Groundwork better visibility and control over day-to-day spending.

Sage Intacct is also supporting their sustainability goals. “We’ve been developing it to measure carbon data across areas like staff travel, buildings, and operations,” Natalie explains. “We have a very ambitious carbon action plan, so having more data lets us invest where we can make the biggest impact.”

As the team grows, integrated systems like Sage Intacct and Sage HR are helping Groundwork scale with purpose. “We have the most staff we’ve ever had,” says Andrew. “These systems are vital as we grow. Having instant information helps our staff deliver projects more effectively and make informed choices.”

Sage Intacct empowers teams to move faster, make smarter decisions, and respond directly to neighbourhood needs. With the right tools in place, Groundwork ensures every bit of funding goes further: creating greener spaces, offering support to young carers, addressing fuel poverty, and helping local residents take action to build stronger, more resilient communities.



Sage Foundation's ongoing volunteer efforts are rejuvenating communities and creating sustainable change, one project at a time.

### **Rolling up sleeves, building up futures**

Groundwork South and North Tyneside has worked alongside the Sage Foundation for many years, united by a shared mission to transform communities and create lasting change. As the Sage Foundation celebrates its 10th anniversary, Natalie reflects on the enduring partnership: "Happy 10th birthday to the Sage Foundation. Fantastic partnership. We look forward to working with you for the next 10 years."

The Sage Foundation's Big Days Out are a regular feature of their commitment to community support, where Sage volunteers come together to make a tangible difference. For instance, one Big Day Out at Jarrow Hall saw 250 volunteers contribute 1,500 hours to hands-on projects that left a lasting mark, like building footpaths, creating allotments, restoring Anglo-Saxon buildings, and assembling educational storage boxes. "It's very much community-based projects during a Sage Big Day Out," says Natalie.

These volunteer efforts create meaningful change for both the environment and local residents. Natalie fondly recalls a day spent building drainage ditches with the Sage Foundation: "People got stuck in the mud and lost their wellies, but it was great fun working together. That kind of day perfectly blends community spirit and volunteering."

Andrew shares a memorable moment: "One Sage Day, at a nursery, children came out to cheer us on, bringing tambourines and maracas. The head teacher and I were in tears at the end. That's what it's all about."

For Groundwork, impact is about more than numbers. Natalie explains, "Impact means seeing people's lives change - whether through school visits, someone finding a job, or hearing stories at celebration events. We also track outcomes like trees planted and children helped. All of this matters."

Measuring and understanding impact is central to the partnership. Andrew says, "We spend a lot of time analysing our impact using systems like Sage Intacct. With the Sage Foundation, volunteer hours are important, and we assign value to them. It's essential Sage Foundation understands the positive difference they make here."

Natalie sums up, "The Sage Foundation's commitment to corporate volunteering is outstanding. It's a valuable partnership, and we look forward to continuing it."

She encourages other organisations to learn from Sage's example: "Communities can benefit from seeing how corporates like Sage support local areas, from practical projects to education or charity governance."

Together, with the support of Sage Intacct and the Sage Foundation, Groundwork South and North Tyneside is well positioned to deepen its impact and continue changing places and lives for many years to come, strengthening communities and showing how collaboration and shared purpose can create lasting, positive change.



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