



SANDSTONE
CARE GROUP

CARE HOMES

CASE STUDY



“

Before PLANERGY, we had no system. There was no visibility, and we were closing accounts on day 20. Now, we close at day 5 with complete oversight.

”

Joanne Muldowney, Finance Director, Sandstone Care Group



Introduction

Care homes in the UK operate in a challenging financial environment, where cost efficiency, budget control, and financial visibility are critical to success.

Sandstone Care Group, a prominent care home provider, faced significant challenges in managing spend across multiple locations. With nine care homes and expanding, the group required a robust Spend Management system that streamlined procurement, enhanced transparency, and improved budget control.

PLANERGY emerged as the solution that transformed their financial operations, delivering efficiency, accuracy, and cost savings.



Now, everything is tracked. We know exactly who raised an order, who approved it, and who processed the invoice. That level of accountability is invaluable.



Joanne Muldowney,
Finance Director, Sandstone Care Group

The Challenges: Lack of Visibility and Control

Before implementing PLANERGY, Sandstone relied on a fragmented system with minimal oversight of procurement and spending. The finance team had no real-time visibility into expenses, making it difficult to track accruals, reconcile invoices, or implement efficient approval processes.

The lack of a centralised system meant:



No structured sign-off procedures, leading to uncontrolled spending.



Delays in month-end closing because of endless paperwork.



Inability to track and control indirect spend across multiple care homes.



No Additional headcount required to manage purchasing across growing operations.

Without a Spend Management system, invoices often arrived for services that had not been pre-approved, resulting in unexpected costs and financial inefficiencies.



The Solution: Implementing PLANERGY

Sandstone Care Group adopted PLANERGY to introduce structured financial controls, automate procurement, and streamline accounts payable processes.

Key benefits included:

1. Improved Budget Control and Transparency

Care home managers can place orders **within their budgetary limits**, ensuring financial discipline across the organisation. Regional managers and directors have **clear oversight on approvals**, ensuring that spending aligns with operational needs.

"PLANERGY has given us much better budget control. Our users can place their own orders within their set limits, from preferred suppliers, streamlining purchasing while maintaining budget compliance."

Joanne Muldowney, Finance Director, Sandstone Care Group

2. Automated Accounts Payable for Efficiency

PLANERGY's AP automation has **significantly reduced our invoice processing time**. It automatically matches invoices with purchase orders, improving accuracy and reducing manual intervention. Previously, we had an Accounts Assistant for every three care homes; now we have one Purchase Ledger Clerk responsible for all Care Homes.

"The automation of accounts payable with PLANERGY has been a huge time saver. I can now process hundreds of invoices quickly and accurately, without the manual workload"

Rebecca Taylor, Purchase Ledger Clerk.

3. Enhanced reporting and analytics:

PLANERGY provides **Enhanced Reporting & Analytics**, giving us **real-time spend visibility**, insights, trend analysis, and compliance tracking. It enables us to make smarter, data-driven decisions and optimise budget control with confidence.

4. Reduced Month-End Close Time

The finance team previously required up to 20 days to close accounts. With PLANERGY, this process has reduced to just 5 days, thanks to better visibility of accruals and real time tracking of invoices and approvals.

"We used to close the accounts on day 20, now we are doing it at very latest on day 10. Since we implemented PLANERGY, our month-end takes half as long as before. The efficiency gains have been game-changing!"

Joanne Muldowney, Finance Director, Sandstone Care Group

5. Seamless Integration with Xero

PLANERGY **integrates seamlessly with Xero**, the accounting software used by Sandstone. The integration allows for smoother financial operations and **significantly reduced manual data entry**.

"The seamless integration with Xero is brilliant, it allows us to drill down straight from Xero into PLANERGY, to see the full purchase trail effortlessly."

Joanne Muldowney, Finance Director, Sandstone Care Group

6. Increased Compliance and Fraud Prevention

PLANERGY ensures that every purchase followed strict approval workflows, **reducing the risk of unauthorised spending**. PLANERGY's A.I. engine **automatically checks supplier invoices for accuracy and 3-way matches** them with purchase orders and delivery documents. It highlights any discrepancies, preventing surprise expenses and eliminating fraudulent or erroneous charges.

Business Impact

Implementing PLANERGY Spend Management has had a measurable impact on Sandstone Care Group's financial operations.

Reduced staffing costs:

Procurement and AP management are consolidated, significantly reducing the need for additional finance team members.



Better supplier management:

PLANERGY give us the data to better negotiate with suppliers, automatically tracking pricing trends, ensuring cost-effectiveness.



Real Cost savings:

Purchase orders, approvals, and invoice matching are automatically 3-way matched and streamlined, saving hours of manual tasks and approval delays.



Scalability Efficiency for growth:

As we add new care homes, PLANERGY allows us to scale without the need for a proportional increase in finance staff.



Conclusion

PLANERGY has transformed the financial operations of Sandstone Care Group, turning a previously inefficient and untracked spend process into a streamlined, data-driven system.

With increased visibility, stronger compliance, and significant time savings, Sandstone Care Group is now well-equipped to scale operations while maintaining financial control.

For care home providers in England looking to enhance their spend management, PLANERGY offers a proven solution that delivers measurable efficiency, cost savings, and peace of mind.

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For Care Homes