

# Case Study



**SHAP enable homeless, vulnerable or disadvantaged people to take control of their own lives through housing, housing support, advocacy and community projects, across fifteen sites in St Helens, Liverpool, Halton and Knowsley.**

SHAP, like so many voluntary organisations, had grown and grown their IT system over time, and it was all starting to creak at the edges. Different staff held, and used, different versions of important documents on different local drives.



## Listening To Needs

It was obvious from an initial meeting that Probado were keen to work with not for

profit organisations, had good values themselves, and listened carefully to SHAP's needs. Essentially, they were able to explain things in English!

Probado then worked with SHAP staff on a project group, developing clear and accountable responsibilities between the two organisations. Probado attended management meetings to answer everyone's questions, and they also trained staff.

## Excellent Working Relationship

SHAP Managing Director, Mark Weights, said there was some resistance to change within the organisation, and a change of culture was needed. Andy Lee-McGurk said the excellent working relationship enabled them to talk through difficult issues and overcome teething problems as they arose. The positive nature of this relationship has been confirmed by internal feedback from staff.

- **Fixed Priced Service**
- **Datacentre Hosted**
- **Sage 200, Office 2007, Server 2008**
- **Used Existing Broadband and Desktop PC's**
- **Thin Client Strategy**
- **Managed Print Service**
- **24x7 Monitoring**
- **Helpdesk**

Mark explained how Probado offered ways that SHAP could structure the work, and only do what genuinely added value – ‘they didn’t go for gold standard every time’ – always being clear and transparent about costs, benefits and limitations of different solutions.

### **System Reliability**

SHAP now have a stable, cost-effective system, which is not reliant on one individual. For Mark, it’s much easier to performance manage, especially for remote and geographically distant sites which are very dependent on IT links.



Staff spend far less time accessing paperwork, giving them more time to spend with Service Users, who themselves have greater access to the net to look for job and accommodation opportunities.

On-going support is always a crucial component of IT work. Andy describes Probado’s support as ‘responsive and flexible’. Staff can contact them direct, and they don’t need to explain too much for Probado to identify and resolve the problem.

‘they can explain, for the decision-maker, the options and benefits, in accessible language...’

Mark had no trouble saying what he most appreciated about working with Probado: ‘They are extremely competent and knowledgeable when operating technically. And they can explain, for the decision-maker, the options and benefits, in accessible language, which is a real skill. That’s very important.’

Mark Weights and Andy Lee-McGurk were interviewed by Rob Cook of Mark Crowe Consulting

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