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Heads-Up

Summer 2023

Welcome to our 2023 Customer Annual Report

The theme of the report this year is **“making a difference”** and at Look Ahead our customers really do make a difference in so many ways.



services in 2022 and to those who have got involved themselves.

Co-production (that is working with you to design and deliver services) is really important to us. At Look Ahead co-production looks like having various channels to share your feedback, peer support volunteering, helping to recruit new staff, joining a customer voice panel, training our staff...and much more!

I'd also like to say a big thank you to one of our volunteers, **Tyler Attack** for helping us to produce this report. Tyler is co-chair of the Customer Incidents Panel, a member of the Tenant and Landlord Panel, and a Peer Support Volunteer. He is also a former customer from one of Look Ahead's young people Services.

In this special annual report edition of **Heads-Up** you can find out more about how our customers are getting involved, having their voices heard and volunteering with us. We celebrate the impact that this involvement has had on our



Kate Mahoney
Customer Experience Manager

We hope you enjoy reading about what we've been up to this year.

If you feel inspired about opportunities to get involved after reading the report, you can find out more by visiting our website, using the QR code, or by emailing us on



gettinginvolved@lookahead.org.uk.

If you would like this report in another language please call **0333 010 4600**

2022/2023 in pictures

Customer Dance event

Customers from our learning disability and mental health services took part in **ANYBODY can dance!**

The event was attended by 70 customers as part of a therapeutic dance programme and great fun was had by all!



Customer event

This year in December, over 100 people gathered to recognise customer achievements at our customer awards celebration at the Museum of London.





Love your home

Over 30 services benefited from small grants to co-design and produce improved indoor and outdoor spaces.



Customers panels

Customers living in a learning disability service gave their views on how we can improve services at various forums over the year.

See page six for details...



Felstead Street Art

Amazing artwork produced by our customers in Felstead Street Mental Health service.



Customer satisfaction in numbers

Thanks to everyone who sent back out customer survey in November 2022.

Here's a quick summary of what the customers that responded told us.

The percentages indicate **satisfied** or **very satisfied**.



86%

Overall satisfaction



77%

Satisfied with the quality of your home



76%

Satisfied with the opportunities to get involved in your local Look Ahead service (Supported Customers Only)



89%

Look Ahead treats them fairly regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, disability or religion



81%

Feel that Look Ahead repairs have improved in the last 12 months



90%

Satisfied or very satisfied that Look Ahead listen to, respect, and encourage you



91%

Satisfied/very satisfied with the choice and control you have in your service



69%

Satisfied or very satisfied with the repairs and maintenance

In addition, our **customer care and support forum** asked us to include a question about inclusion and accessibility. The reason for this was that this was missing and was an important question, particularly for those customers living in a learning disability service.



84%

are satisfied or very satisfied with the accessibility/inclusion of Look Ahead services.

This feedback will help us shape our priorities for the coming year, **watch out for our 2023 survey coming soon.**

Highlights form 2022/23 – Making a Difference

There have been lots of highlights this year in terms of customer involvement and co-production. We have a number of forums that are led by the Co-production Team, here is a quick summary of what they have been doing

Customer Incidents Panel

Due to the nature of our work, there are many incidents and accidents that happen in services.

Support staff and managers review these to understand what took place, why they happened, if we responded well and what we could do better next time. We realised that to learn and improve we also needed to include customers in the learning process and so Look Ahead's Co-production and Safeguarding Team worked together to develop the incident panel.



This new Customer Incidents Panel launched last year. It is co-chaired by **Tyler Attack** (a former customer

at one of our young people services) and **Mike Bansback**, (above) Look Ahead's Head of Safeguarding and Quality.

The new panel met three times last year with nine customer members from across our specialisms sharing their views. Members include both current and former Look Ahead customers, as well as volunteers with lived experience of accessing services similar to those that Look Ahead provide.

Feedback and learning from the panel has been fed back to the main Safeguarding Panel. This has been based around staff being more proactive about addressing issues and being more willing to difficult conversations with customers when necessary.

Members of the panel have said that they want to make sure that their views are heard beyond this panel as well. As a result of this they are now giving regular updates to our Senior Leadership and Board members through the main Safeguarding Panel. Later in 2023 we are also planning on hosting a "**Safeguarding Learning Event**" bringing together our Customer Panel Board members and colleagues.

Hear from Tyler, one of our co-chairs:

“I've got a deep-rooted desire and need to make things better for everything and everyone around me which is why I got involved with the panel.

The bottom line is that incidents are going to happen due to the nature of Look Ahead services. But by being part of the panel we review them and find learning and common issues. This involves picking out the good, the bad and the ugly and everything in between and having a discussion around that.

“My role as Co-Chair involves making sure everything's in place for the meeting and making sure that meetings stay on track as there is a lot to get through.

*“But more importantly, **my role is to make current customers on the panel feel comfortable and have their voices heard.** I've been through what they are going through, and I think that makes them open up more. When I was receiving support in a service you could tell which Support Workers understood what I was going through. I'm that person for customers on the panel.”*

Tenant and Landlord panel (TALP)

We've had 18 Tenant Representatives from across all our specialisms attend our Tenant and Landlord Panel over three meetings in 2022/23.

This includes our mental health, homelessness, young people, and learning disability services. We also have members who live in Look Ahead properties without support.

The Tenant and Landlord Panel is a meeting between Look Ahead tenants and management to come together and scrutinise our performance as a landlord. We think about what is going well, what needs improving, and come up with ideas for how we can make things better.

As requested by our Tenant Representatives, this year the panel has covered topics that include customer wi-fi, room personalisation, repairs, our annual customer survey results and more!

Customer quote:

“ I joined TALP after chatting to the co-production team about my ideas to make repairs better. They said my opinions could be really useful in this forum and I felt I could help them to do better.

“It's a quarterly meeting that we have where people join from all different services and staff teams, including those who are higher up in Look Ahead and sometimes external contractors. It covers a whole range of things including repairs and maintenance, the homely feel of the place, and more.

“It's also given me insight into the way many different parts of Look Ahead are run which I can then use to improve things and help others. It's an ever-changing environment and there are always things that you're doing well, or that you can do better. It's given me analysis skills to say these are the facts, this is what's happened, and come up with solutions.”



Board Away Day

As an organisation Look Ahead is run by a Board of Directors who have ultimate responsibility for how the organisation is run and our future strategy.



In October 2022, four customers attended our **Board Away Day** to talk about their experiences of Look Ahead and volunteering with us. During the day, workshops were held with board members to talk about various aspects of our co-production strategy. It gave our customers the opportunity to influence the Board first hand and to shape the direction of travel for our business strategy.

Joanne Matthews who started volunteering with Look Ahead four years ago and attended the Away Day said:



“When I first came into volunteering, I was very nervous about meeting and working with new people. Even travelling up to London was a big task for me.

When I joined Look Ahead, I didn't know what it was and now I've been asked to do a lot of things like attending the Board Away Day last year.

To meet the board members and have them be interested in me is amazing. I've never had that in my working life before.”

Customer Care and Support Forum

Our Customer Care and Support Forum launched in 2022. It provides a safe and responsive environment for customers across all of our services to provide constructive feedback and identify areas for improvements around our care and support delivery.

It's also an opportunity for customers to actively inform, engage and co-produce in line with Look Ahead's values, and Co-Production and Customer Engagement Strategy.

Last year, 11 customer representatives from across our mental health, learning disability and homelessness services joined the forum over two meetings. Within these meetings we have discussed customer feedback, communication, night staffing and our customer service standards, and more!



Customer involvement with recruitment



In 2022 customers got involved with recruitment of their support workers, service teams as well as for roles that work in our head office.

Involvement can include helping to develop questions for our “customer question bank”, sitting on interview panels or meeting and greeting interview candidates. It doesn’t have to be a regular commitment but helps you have a valued input into your service. We’ve had some great feedback from customers who have been involved with recruitment, **one customer said:**

“They asked for my support during the interview and at the end of each interview. They asked my opinion first. The interviewee fully respected me the whole time I was there.

“The contract manager valued me equally in the interview process and when

we had a chat before each interview. By the end of the process, we’d come to the same conclusion about the candidates.”

Another said:

“One of my favourite things to assist with is interviewing potential staff members. After all, it’s important that my support workers hire the best colleagues they can, I ask the candidates questions about how they would best support me and other customers to do the activities we enjoy.

“It feels great to help make a difference in this way, and I would encourage every customer to get involved where they can.”

In 2023 we are aiming for 80% of all staff recruitment to have customer involvement.

Tenant handbook & accessibility

We have an online tenant handbook that has lots of information about your rights as a customer, information about your tenancy and more.

The website also has an accessibility tool so that you can listen to the information in audio, in large font or different languages for example.

It also has a performance section that lets you know how Look Ahead is performing in key areas and actions that we have taken based on your feedback and queries.

To access the Tenant Handbook on the Look Ahead website visit lookahead.org.uk/tenant-handbook



Inspiring customers, Matthew's story

Every year we hear inspirational stories from our customers about how they have progressed during their time with Look Ahead. Hear from Matthew, a former customer who became a Look Ahead support worker after volunteering in our services:



My time with Look Ahead actually started when I became a customer around eight years ago. I came out of prison in 2014 and was placed in a Look Ahead hostel. After a while, I decided to get involved with Look Ahead's volunteering programmes as a Peer Support Assistant.

I did an 18-month volunteering post at a Look Ahead service in Pimlico; I helped with admin, supported customers with medical appointments and helped carry out regular room checks.

I then moved on to another service where I got to volunteer with customers who had also been in prison or in trouble with the police before. I got to do such great work with the group because I'm familiar with that environment.

Later, an opportunity to take up a role came, so I went for it and got the position, and stayed there until 2018. From there, a colleague reached out and invited me to apply for a paid part-time role as a Support Worker at a Look Ahead mental health service in Kensington and Chelsea.

I was flattered when I was offered the job but I refused at first, I needed to make sure I felt ready in myself; it's no use taking on more than you can handle. After a bit longer, I went full-time and I've never looked back. I love working in the service, you get to meet so many different customers, from such different backgrounds.

My joy is seeing customers turn their lives around, gradually like I did. It's not a race after all.

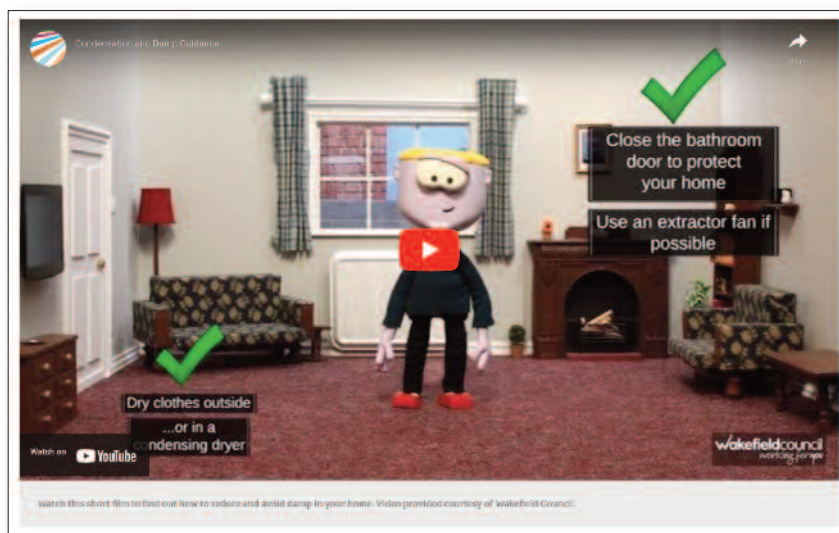
It's so amazing watching a person who wants to make a change striving, and you get to be a part of that change with them.

My goal now is to take on a more senior role at Look Ahead, I've already been invited to apply, but I'm taking my time to get there and enjoying the ride. I'm currently doing an NVQ Level 3 qualification. Once that's out of the way, I'm planning to keep moving upwards. **It's all very exciting.**

Condensation, damp and mould

Damp can cause mould on walls and furniture and cause wooden window frames to rot. It's also unhealthy.

On our website you will find top tips to avoid damp and mould.



In a nutshell to avoid damp/mould you need to:



- Produce less moisture so keep lids on pans when cooking, dry clothes outside where you can. If you have no choice but to dry clothes inside, we would always advise that you open your windows in the room designated and close internal door to isolate it from the rest of the property.



- Wipe down surfaces after cooking and don't turn off the extractor fan or close the window as soon as you finish.



- Let the damp air out and the fresh air in – keep windows open just a little when you see condensation building up.

- Use draft excluders.




- Heat your home a little more – not too much but a little - very cold rooms are likely to get more damp and mould.





- Clean off any signs of mould with a spray bleach.

Do you know how much moisture you're producing?

Having a bath/shower = 1.5 litres per person 

Washing dishes = 1 litre 

Drying clothes = 6 litres 

Cooking and using the kettle = 3 litres 

If you don't let this moisture out, it can cause damp in your home and the right conditions for mould to grow!



If you have condensation or damp, the most important thing is to report to it us.

Do this by calling **0333 010 4600** reporting via email in non-emergency situations to **repairs@lookahead.org.uk**, or via the website.

Getting in touch

Would you like to be kept up to date with your repairs and maintenance, or come to us with general enquiries? Then why not cut out the middleman and get in touch with the Customer Contact Centre.

We have a dedicated **Customer Contact Centre** which operates **Monday to Friday, 9am -5pm.**

This is a one-stop- shop for all customers. The team are very experienced and are professional and many them have worked in our support services.

The team are here to help you with:

- Reporting repairs and maintenance needs
- Gardening and communal areas
- Facilities and security issues for example anti-social behaviour
- Complaints or compliments – if you have a concern or complaint the team can help you to resolve the issue or work with other departments to do so.

- Housing and rent issues if your Support Worker can't help you
- Reporting damp or mould
- Any other general enquiries

You can call them on

0333 010 4600

You can also report your repairs by sending us an email on **Repairs@lookahead.org.uk** or if you have any general enquires you can email us on **GetInTouch@lookahead.org.uk**

In the evenings and weekend, the service is available to support you with emergency repairs.

Stock condition surveyors and why they matter

As a Look Ahead resident, you or your support staff may get contacted about stock condition surveys.

Stock condition surveyors want to have a look at your home.

This is a good thing, and there's nothing to worry about.

You should let them into the property so they can check it over and make sure everything is okay for you. Please make sure you always check contractors for I.D. before allowing access.

They will check the condition of things like the kitchen units, the boiler, the windows, the bathroom, fire doors, and communal decorations, etc.

This means that necessary planned maintenance upgrades or major works can be planned more quickly and efficiently. It also means that you will need fewer repairs in the future.

If you are contacted about a stock condition survey, and you have any questions, you can get in touch with Look Ahead **Planned Maintenance Team.**

You can email them directly on **planned&asset@lookahead.org.uk**

Or you can call the Customer Contact Centre on **0333 010 4600** and mention stock condition surveys.