



January - March 2018



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Heads-Up

This **customer newsletter** is the place to find out what's going on at Look Ahead

Welcome to the first Heads-up of 2018!

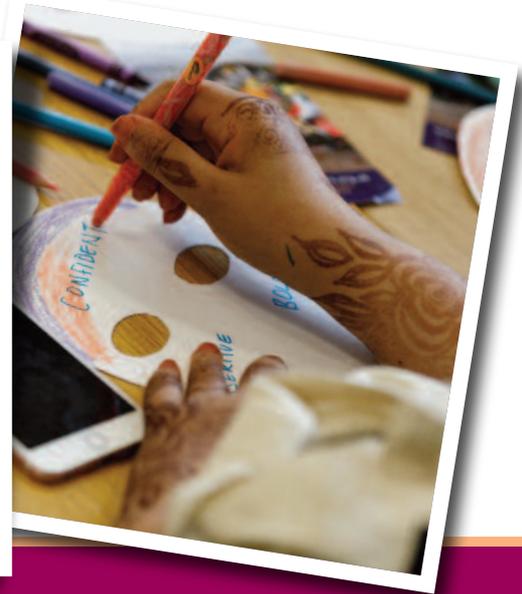
In this issue we're looking back at some of the fun things that have been going on in our services as well as giving you an update on the exciting things that we have coming up over the next few months.

2017 was a busy year at Look Ahead - we opened a total of eight new services and supported over 200 new customers. More than 100

customers came together to celebrate their achievements as part of our Customer Celebration in September; this included our annual Customer Awards and performances from several customers. Take a look at some of our favourite photos from 2017 below.

This year will be no different. We have already opened two new services and we're continuing to explore new ways for us to improve the support we are offering. We recently launched a

programme in a number of services to test new software that can help staff to complete support plans online, making them much easier and quicker to edit during key work sessions. We are also testing a new reward programme for our volunteers (read more about this on page 4). Everything we are working toward is about improving our services for you as our customers. We'd love to hear your views on things you would like us to be doing, send us an email to feedback@lookahead.org.uk.



What's been going on in services?

Over the past few months, staff and customers at our services have been busy organising a variety of different events to kick off 2018.

From communal cooking lessons to using music as a form of therapy, our services are always thinking of new ideas to get customers together for fun and interesting activities. Below you can see just a few examples of some of the great things people have been up to.

Horticultural therapy at Hopkinson House

The team at Hopkinson House Hostel in Westminster recently launched their new horticultural therapy programme for customers.

Staff and customers worked together with mental health charity Mind and gardening charity Thrive to build a greenhouse and planting area in the hostel garden.

Customers will be able to use this area to plant a variety of vegetables including beans and peas as well as some flowers.



Music therapy at Teresa House and Hamlets Way

The team at Teresa House and Hamlets Way in Tower Hamlets are running therapeutic music sessions for their customers.

During the sessions customers get the chance to play a variety of different instruments including the guitar and drums. Music has been proven to be a positive tool in mental health support to aid recovery and support wellbeing and the sessions have been very popular with customers.



These sessions are now open to all Look Ahead customers and you can find out more information about how to attend by emailing: _TeresaHouseandHamletsWay@lookahead.org.uk

Cook and share event at Turner Close

Customers at Turner Close, mental health service, in Kent recently spent a day making a variety of tasty treats as part of their cook and share event.

The group started by preparing cookie dough which they cut into different shapes and sizes. Once cooked, everyone took turns to decorate the cookies with different coloured icing and sprinkles. As well as the cookies, the group tried their hands at pastry for mince pies and apple pies. Once the pastry had been rolled out and cut to size, it was filled to the brim with delicious fillings.



Congratulations to customer Mary who won the Star Baker award on the day!



Customer Christmas card design competition

Every year, at Christmas we send cards to say thank you to all of the people who have helped us over the past 12 months.

This year, rather than buying cards, we held a competition to ask our customers to design the card for us. We had a lot of great entries and our judges decided on a colourful snowflake design drawn by Mark from our Slough Hostel.



Thank you to everyone who sent in a design and congratulations to Mark!

My Luv is like a red rose
That is bright like June
That is sweetly play'd
in a tune

My luv is like a red rose
That will always be lit
Like the moon

Deeper than the ocean
My luv will never dry
Till night & day
My luv will never part

From Sunrise to
Sundown I will
Always be there

My luv is like a red rose

By **Matthew**,
Look Ahead customer

Finding new ways to reward our volunteers

Everyday at Look Ahead we have lots of amazing volunteers giving their time to help us make our services better.

Many things we do as an organisation wouldn't be possible without the hard work of our fantastic team of more than 30 volunteers and we believe it important to make sure all of our volunteers are rewarded for what they do.

In response to feedback from our volunteers, we have been developing a new rewards system that we're trialling for six months. As part of the new system, volunteers who have done a minimum of eight hours a quarter will be given access to a site offering a variety of free activities and deals such as paintballing, a professional photo shoot or a massage.

If you are interested in being part of this trial please speak to the manager at your service or email volunteering@lookahead.org.uk.

Customer Services Committee (CSC) update

On Thursday 7 of December, Shepherd's Bush Housing Group on behalf of Placeshapers organised and hosted an event with then-Housing Minister-Alok Sharma.



Several of our CSC members attended the event, which was an opportunity for the Minister to listen to issues, concerns, suggestions and ideas of social housing tenants from across London.

This was one of a number of workshops across the country to meet and hear from social tenants.

The learnings from the session will help to build up a clear picture of the important issues that people living in social housing face and to inform a national approach to social housing.

"Regaining my hope"

In life, there are many different stages that we go through. I am at a point in my life where I no longer see myself as the youth that I used to be. Some call it growing old gracefully.

For me, this stage in my life makes me think of a scripture that I have read for the last 15 years, which says: "Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood anymore." (Isaiah 54:4 King James Bible).

As someone with mental health needs, there have been times in my life where I have experienced the stigma that can often come with mental health. In this article, I want to reveal the technique that I have used for many years to deal with this stigmatisation. It is a technique that has helped me to live with good mental health in the community. It has led to 23 years of solid work experience both paid and voluntary; it has helped me to obtain a driver's license, an access diploma to social work and a certificate in Education in Public Health and Social Care. It has led to the beginnings of my own personal charity called Barrocks Charities that works with the vulnerable including those who have mental illness and the list continues.

Therefore, I am not talking about dealing with stigma from theory but from actual experience.

What I have learned about stigma is not that the world is against those who have mental health needs. It is more like we reflect our own psychological traits through the way that we relate to others.

If we are generally paranoid we will see others in that form. If we generally love we will see others in that form, not because that is how they are but because of how we are. We only see a reflection of ourselves in others.

One way that I have found to deal with stigma is to remove myself from the situation or environment that is making me feel stigmatised. I do this by going to the park. In fact, I went there when Salvo (my Support Worker) told me that the editor wanted me to expand a little on how I deal with stigma in this article. When he emailed me the news; I immediately emailed him back, telling him, no. Then I went to the park where I could examine my motives. I looked at my core beliefs vs the core beliefs of the psychosis.

Through self-therapy and taking part in some psychological therapies, I have learnt to be able to discern the mask of my psychosis (which

for me is based on religious themes) and separate it from my Christian beliefs. Once I had taken some time to gain mastery over the voices; I went home and looked at the email again. This time, I saw it differently, without the mask of the psychosis that reflected the stigma. To put it bluntly, the first time that I saw Salvo's email I knew that the psychosis would surface.

By learning to re-evaluate the situation in a place of quiet I was able to discern my real thoughts vs the thoughts of the psychosis. Only at that point can I make a rational decision. Sometimes this process will take months, but it is very important because I am learning to master the voices until they have no place in my thoughts or my life anymore.

"Through the support I receive at Look Ahead I feel that I am able to fail so that I may succeed"

Through the support I receive at Look Ahead I feel that I am able to fail so that I may succeed, and because I am regaining my hope I am no longer controlled by the fear of stigma which for many people like me is often more in our thinking and not in reality. It is the thinking that formed the reality. If I am taught that the world is against me that would be my reality and so my reflection of the world.

Horace, Look Ahead customer



Accessing your information



To help us make sure that we are able to offer the best support possible, Look Ahead keeps information about each of our customers. This includes any history of previous support you may have received as well as a record of any of your meetings with staff.

The Government recently changed the rules around the process for requesting access to this information. Our Information Governance Officer, Nikki, explains how you can request access to the information we hold on you.

Q Who can request to access information?

A All customers have the right to request access to the information Look Ahead has stored about them. This can be information about your records held in different formats, including but not limited to: electronic or hard copies, photographs, audio, and CCTV images, which holds information relating to you. Request for access to records and for information about those records is known as Subject Access Request (SAR).

Q How do I request this information?

A If you would like to access your information, you can make a request by email to: myinforequest@lookahead.org.uk or in writing to:
**Information Governance Officer
 Look Ahead
 Kings Building
 16 Smith Square
 London SW1P 3HQ**

Q What should be included in your request?

- A** • The date the request is made.
- A detailed explanation of what information you would like.
- If you are acting on behalf of someone else then we will need to see written proof you are legally acting on someone's behalf.
- If you are unable to make a request yourself, you can authorise a police officer, a medical practitioner or another legal representative to make the request for you.

Q What will I need to show?

- A** We may need to see identification before we can release this information to you. Examples of the types ID we can accept include:
- **Birth certificate** (or certified copy)
 - **Driving licence**
 - **Passport**
 - **2 x official letters** (e.g. utility bills)



Q Will this cost me any money?

A Most of the time Look Ahead will not charge you for processing a SAR. However, a fee may occasionally be applied for the time and resources taken to collect the information. You will be notified if you are going to be charged.

Q How long will this take?

A Look Ahead is required to respond to SARs within one month of the date when we receive the request.

Q What can I do if I am not happy?

A If you are not happy with how Look Ahead have managed your SAR then you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at: www.ico.org.uk

COMPETITION CORNER

ENTER TO WIN PRIZES



Can you find the names of some of our services hidden in the word search below?

Find the one service listed that is **not** in the word search and email it to communications@lookahead.org.uk

First correct answer drawn out of the hat will win a **£25 high street** voucher.

Services to include in the search:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Edward Alsop | Hope House |
| Manor Place | Woodlands |
| Oakview | Ibis House |
| Common Road | Rainforest Walk |



SUDOKU

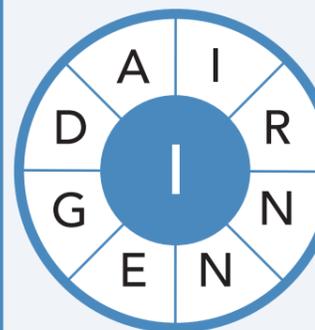
WIN £25 HIGH STREET VOUCHER

			2		6			3
		4				8	1	
		1		9				
	4	2						
8							7	5
			3			1		
	1				5		2	
3	5		7					6
	6				9		3	

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, column and each of the 3x3 squares contains all the digits from 1 to 9. Email the digits in the green squares to communications@lookahead.org.uk to be entered into the prize draw.

The winner will receive a voucher for £25

WORD WHEEL



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters in the word wheel?

Letters may be used only once and the centre letter must be used in each word. No words with capitals, hyphen or apostrophe, no verb forms ending in 's' and no plurals ending with 's'.

This one is just for fun.

All answers must be emailed to communications@lookahead.org.uk by 31 March to be entered into the prize draw. Terms and conditions can be found on our website.

Look Ahead people: Meet David

Heads-up is created by and for Look Ahead customers, and every issue we use this section to get to know more about a staff member or customer. This time we meet David, a customer at one of our young people's services in Barking and Dagenham.



David is currently attending a local college and working towards a Level 2 Traineeship in plumbing. Recently, he

spoke to his Support Worker Glen about wanting to gain some work experience to help him with his training and improve his chances of finding employment. Glen contacted our Repairs and Voids Manager about the possibility of David finding work experience with one of the companies who look after the maintenance of our services.

Our team set up a meeting with our contractor MNM. This could have been a nervewracking situation for David but he took it all in his stride. It went well and they agreed that he would start a placement with them the following week.

"I am enjoying my work experience quite a lot"

On his first day, David was given a full operational induction with the MNM Health & Safety Coordinator providing him with H&S training and full personal protective equipment and then he was off! David said, "I am enjoying my work experience quite a lot and look forward to attending every week".

Before starting the placement, David was worried about the early starts as he has to leave his home at 7am to be on time, but with the support of the team at The Vineries, he's made it on time every day. David also said the support he has received from his Support Worker

and Look Ahead's Property Services team has really motivated him and he is happy that people had confidence in him. David is being mentored by Robyn, one of MNM's senior plumbers, who added "David is a good listener and he is committed to attending every Wednesday with me at various sites where I am carrying out plumbing works. He is punctual and polite."

By the end of the placement, David will be able to install taps, cisterns, showers, piping and clearing of blockages. Following his placement, he hopes to obtain an apprenticeship in plumbing and to become a fully qualified plumber in the near future.

If you are interested in gaining work experience with one of our building maintenance contractors please speak to your Support Worker to find out more about how we can help you.

Do you want to be the next person we talk to?

Have you done something amazing that you would like to share? Are you involved in your local service?

If you would like to be the person we introduce in the next issue of Heads-up, let us know.

You can either send us an email with your details to communications@lookahead.org.uk or call us on **0207 368 6972**.