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Heads-Up

Spring 2022

You said, we did

Welcome



Nicole Njie, Director of Housing & Customer Service

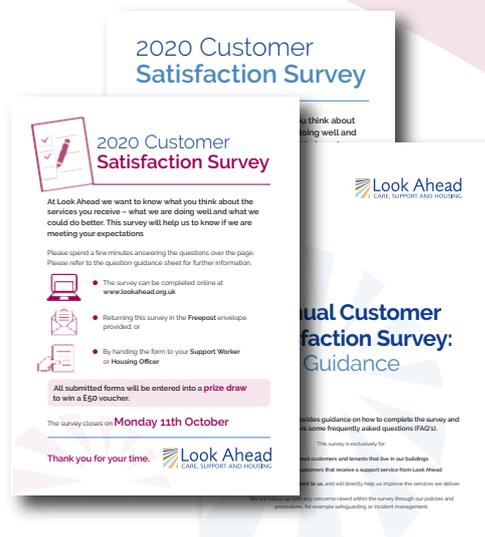
Welcome to this special edition of Heads-Up.

Three years ago we launched our customer Co-production and Customer Insight Strategies which outlined

our commitment to customer involvement, in the design and delivery of our services (known as co-production) and to provide transparency for our customers and their support networks and advocates.

This special edition is part of that **commitment to respond to your feedback**, be honest about our performance and highlight areas for improvement and our plans for the future and our progress.

Each year we ask for your views and feedback through our annual customers' satisfaction survey. This special edition gives a summary of your feedback, views and opinions from the satisfaction survey responses collected in summer 2020 and most



recently in autumn of 2021; as well as from your complaints, compliments, and feedback over the past 18 months.

More importantly it outlines Look Ahead's responses; our actions and plans to **improve customer experiences, satisfaction levels and quality of service.**

A massive thank you to TALP members



Sharon Slotnick
Chair – TALP
Board Member – Look Ahead

Greetings from the Chair of the Tennant and Landlord Panel (TALP) and what a year this has been!

As the TALP Chair and a Board Member I want say a massive 'thank you' to TALP Members who worked

with us in this most difficult and unusual time. You have given your time so generously to help us better understand how to improve what we do and to learn from you. Thank you also to the Look Ahead staff who participated in our panel meetings and worked so hard to review processes and make change.

We have been able to address some very specific issues raised by members on behalf of all of our customers. Our survey results reflect this positively.

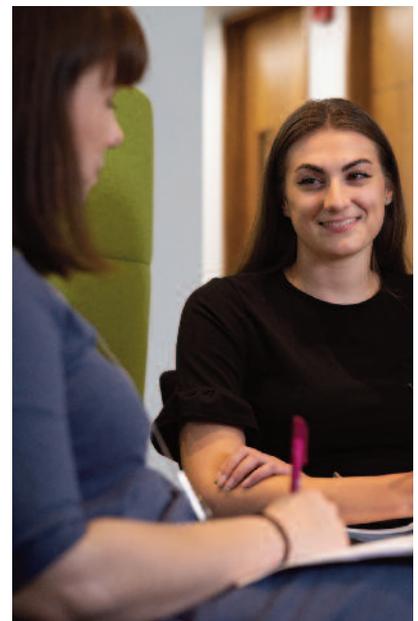
We are pleased to see that customers feel that Look Ahead treat them fairly regardless of their gender, race age, religion, disability etc. We will continue to keep working on this together along with overall satisfaction. It is also very encouraging to see

that customers feel listened to and respected. This is at the forefront of our mission and will continue to be so.

We have made some good progress including changing how we explain rent charges in our rent statements, looking at how and where CCTV is installed and maintained, focusing on feedback about our IT and technology and many more. Of course there is much more to do and I look forward to another forward-thinking year with TALP!

For anyone interested joining in TALP please speak to your local managers and they can help put you in touch.

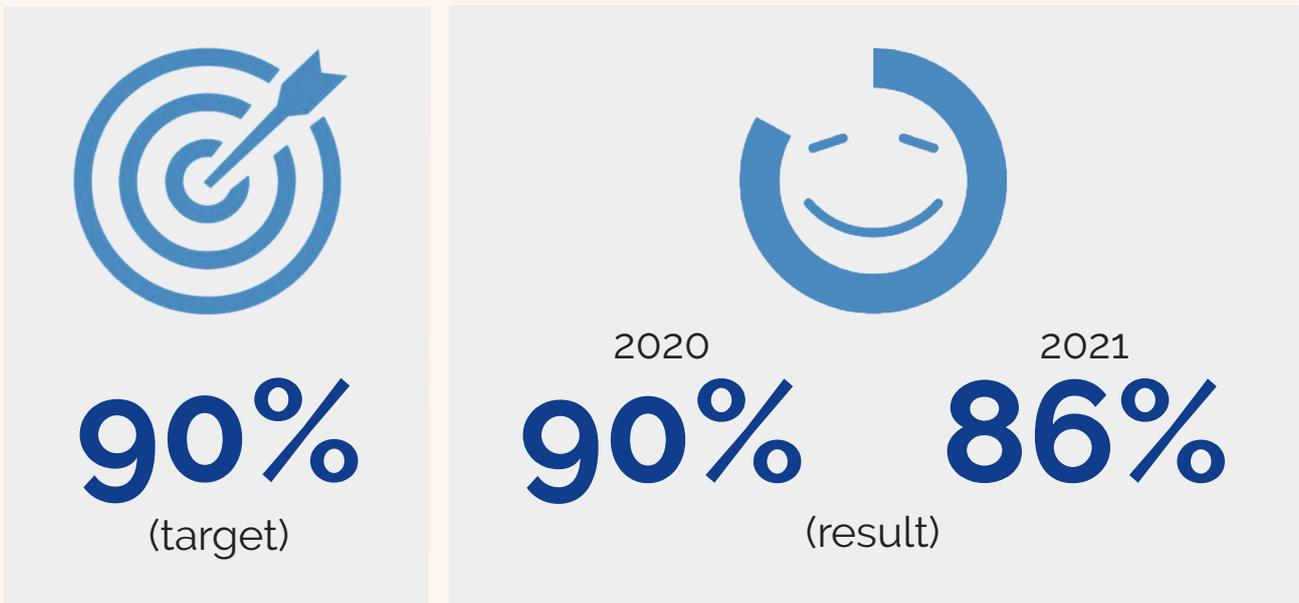
Thank you again and best wishes to all for a good and healthy year ahead!



SECTION 1 - What you told us

How you feel overall is really important to us, we asked you how you felt about our services in general and this is what we learned.

Overall satisfaction with Look Ahead



What you told us we did well



- Customers said they felt listened to and respected



- Customers felt they were treated fairly in relation to their gender, race, age, religion, and other protected characteristics



- Customers felt well-informed and safe during Look Ahead's Covid-19 pandemic response



What you told us we could improve



- Provide more involvement opportunities and local activities – especially during the Covid-19 pandemic and periods of lockdown



- Improve our response and management of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) which includes things like customers making excessive noise or leaving rubbish outside their homes



- Make sure rent and service charge offers value for money



- Improve how quickly and well we deal with your maintenance and repair issues



- Improve the quality of our homes



- Work to retain great staff so customers receive more consistent support

SECTION 2 – Involving our customers

We involve our customers in every part of our work. It is important for us, and we believe it is important for you – together we can do so much more. Our customers and staff are equal partners; together we can solve problems, make decisions, set the right strategies and design and deliver better services.

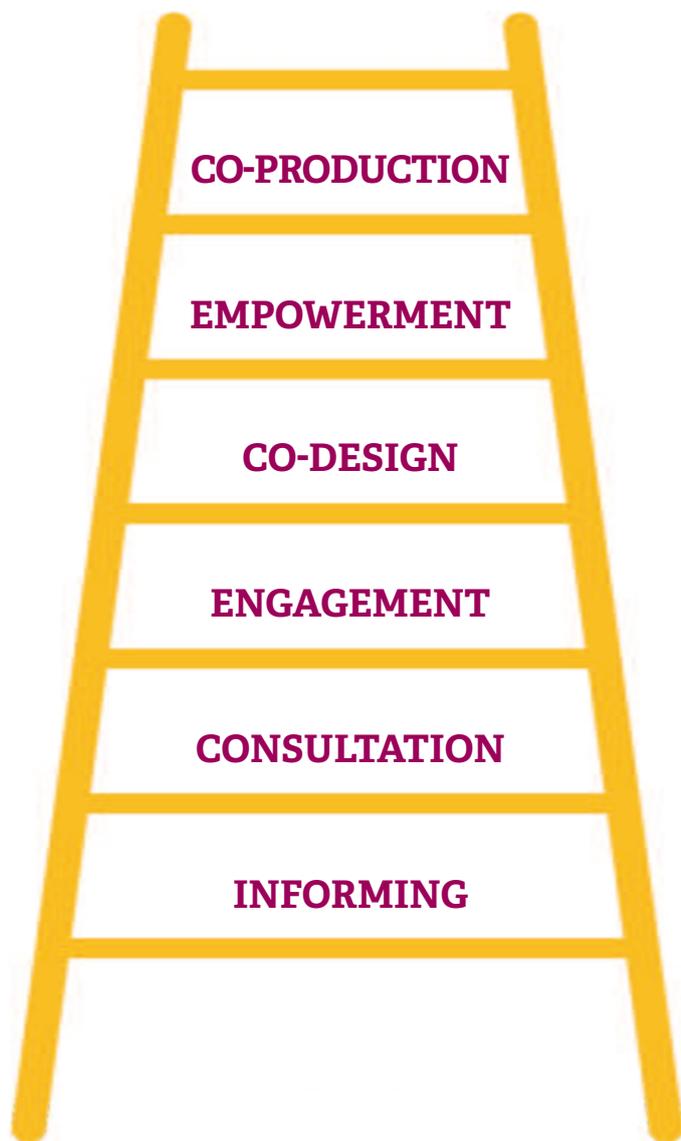
How satisfied are you that Look Ahead staff listen to you, respect you and encourage you?



92%
Overall Satisfaction



As well as the Tenant and Landlord Panel, there are many other ways you can get involved at Look Ahead. The Co-production Ladder shows the different ways you can get involved and make a difference.



This ladder shows all the different levels of involvement you can have. We have many different ways you can do this.

For example

- Experts-By-Experience Training
- Tenant and Landlord Panel
- Helping staff recruitment
- Serving on complaint panels
- Work in our teams to do Quality Audits, recruitment, forums and panels
- Influencing the design of contracts and services e.g. repairs contract

Just to name a few!

If you want to learn more about the co-production ladder, please see our Co-Production Strategy in the tenant handbook on our website:

www.lookahead.org.uk/tenanthandbook



Tenant and Landlord Panel

The **Tenant and Landlord Panel (TALP)** has met seven times since it first began in 2019, with 25 different customers attending across those meetings.

How satisfied are you with the opportunities to get involved in your local Look Ahead service?
(Supported customers only)



80%
Overall Satisfaction

Since starting in July 2019, the panel has provided customers with an opportunity to share their feedback and ideas and influence decision-making. This helps Look Ahead stay transparent and accountable to all customers.

25
different reps
from across all
specialisms

We have had 25 Tenant Representatives participate on the panel. This includes our mental health, homelessness, young people and learning disability services. We also have members who live in Look Ahead properties without support.





Raf, a customer at one of our homelessness services is involved with the Tenant and Landlord Panel. Raf tells us about his experience as a Tenant Representative, and why he thinks other customers should join the Panel.

"The Panel is really good because, for example, you live in a hostel and something goes wrong, so you go to your support worker or the repairs team, and then there's a process to fix it. You think okay, but where does it go from there? Who is the person on the other end? The Panel gives you an opportunity to see what's on the other side. It gives you a voice, and although it's not a forum to raise your specific issues, it allows you understand those issues and look at all of the layers behind it."

It's about holding the people that are keeping you safe to account, but in a positive way. You get to meet the people behind Look Ahead departments and ask questions.

It's all set up so all you have to do is come and join. It took me a bit of time to fully understand it, but it does what it's designed to. You are a customer, you have a voice, and it is your right to speak up. Don't feel like everything has to be left to your support worker and you can't do anything.

By getting involved in TALP you can also go into other avenues, for example Peer Support Volunteering, co-production and other opportunities with the Customer Experience team.

"The next TALP is taking place later on this year ... and you'll hear this American voice beaming - you actually listened to me!"

The TALP has created change in several areas.

Some of the key achievements of the Panel include:-

You said



Tenant representatives raised concerns around CCTV not working properly and how important it is for their safety.



Tenant representatives told us that they weren't satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service, primarily its quality of repairs, consistency, and lack of communication around appointments or no-shows.



Our Tenant and Landlord Panel recently gave feedback on tenant rent statements, stating that they were difficult to understand and caused unnecessary anxiety to customers.

We did

We have since done an organisation-wide review of our CCTV, the results of which have been shared with TALP. CCTV is also a key feature of our digital plans going forward.

We used this feedback in our repairs and maintenance improvement plan. Customers then worked with us to choose and hire new maintenance contractors.

Due to tenant feedback, rent statements are now sent out alongside a guide explaining how to understand them.



80%
(target)

Customer Involvement in selecting and recruiting Look Ahead staff

We've set the goal that by March 2022, we will involve customers in at least 80% of all staff recruitment.

In partnership with customers we have developed a customer involvement recruiting

manager's guide that includes a customer question bank for all roles.

Our commitment means this is part of the recruitment of all roles, from Support Workers to Board level recruitment.

Customer reward and recognition policy

We want to recognise our customers who get involved across all levels of the organisation, and be clear and transparent about the rewards.

You said

You told us that that you wanted a range of reward and recognition options. **Recognition and life skills** from involvement were more important. Money was not a significant factor.



We did

We created an updated Customer Reward and Recognition Policy, taking on feedback from customer input from across all customer groups and our Peer Support Volunteers.

As well as rewards the policy focuses on **skills** and **opportunities** such as the chance to shape and influence, social and communication skills, personal development, training and work skills, and routes into employment.

The policy also explains how we give gift vouchers and refreshments, and how we support customers to get involved by paying their travel costs or helping them access computers and support to purchase internet data. It also gives examples of the various ways that we recognise and showcase customers who get involved with our opportunities.

You can find this policy through our website, and also by request from staff.

Looking forward

We are committed to

- Growing our co-production and customer engagement opportunities
- Supporting services to better engage and involve customers locally, including our customers who do not receive support
- Involving customers in choosing major contractors starting with our repairs and voids contractors
- Involving customers in at least 80% of staff recruitment

SECTION 3 – Your home

Look Ahead understands that your living environment makes a big difference. We are committed to providing good quality accommodation and making sure your environment, including the building and grounds are safe, clean and well-maintained.

How satisfied are you with the repairs and maintenance service you receive from Look Ahead?

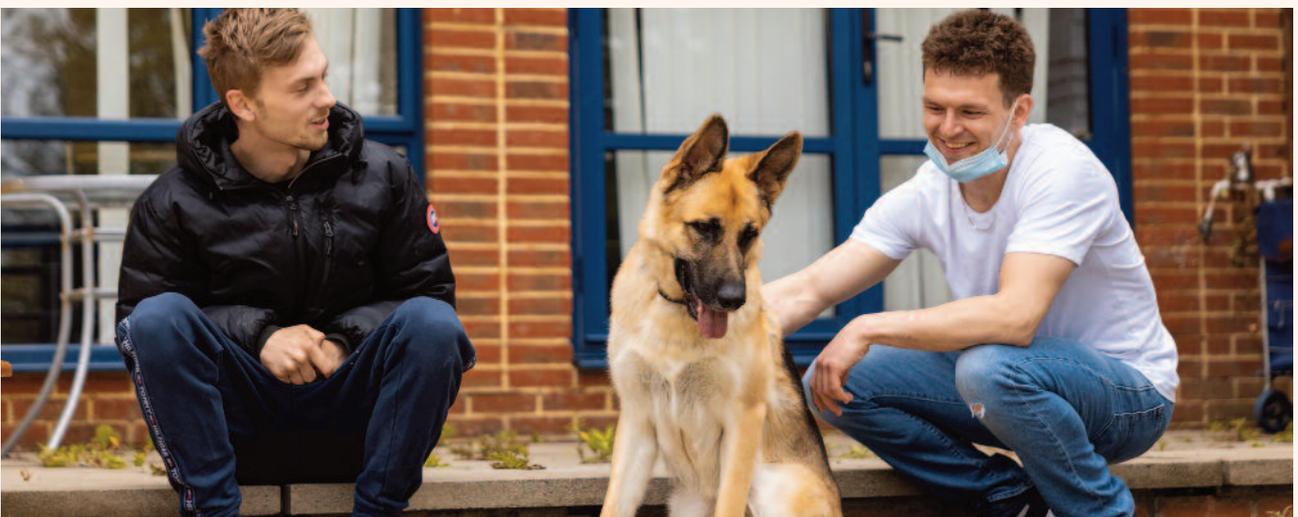


74%
Overall Satisfaction

How satisfied are you with where you live and the quality of your home?



88%
Overall Satisfaction



We have developed a plan that sets out how we will maintain, repair and make sure all our customers' homes are safe and meet a reasonable state of repair, as outlined in the **“Decent Homes Standard”** set by the Regulator of Social Housing.

Our building safety plans cover:

- Gas safety
- Lift safety
- Electrical safety
- Water safety
- Fire safety



Repairs and Maintenance

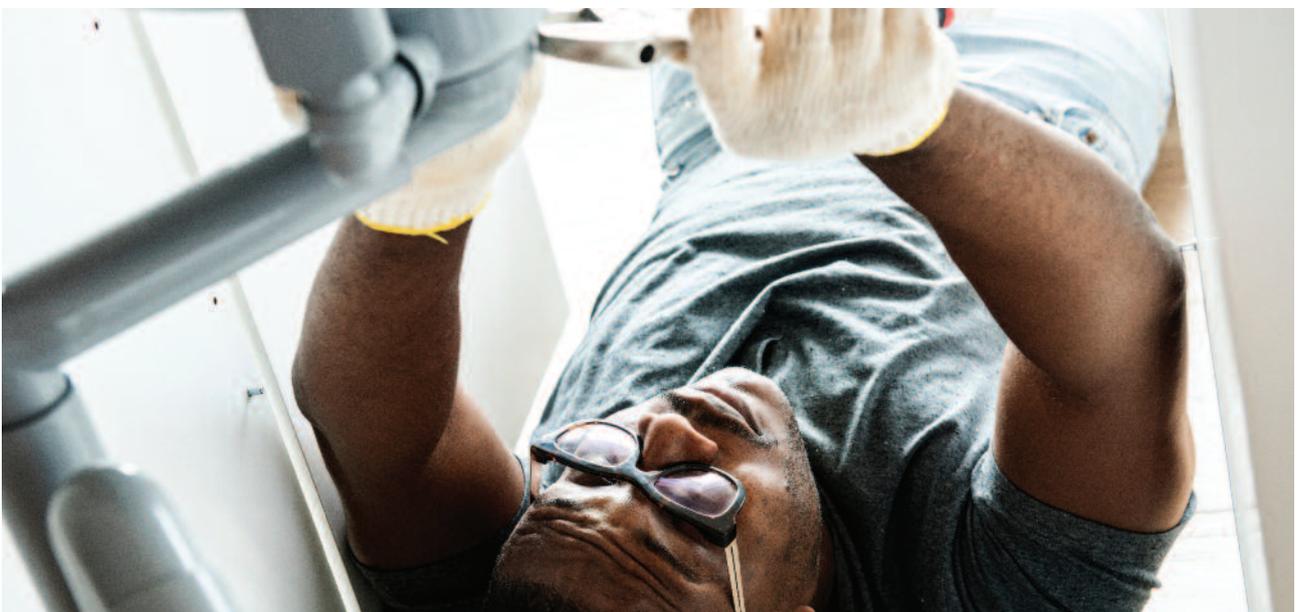
You said

You told us that you are generally happy with the standard of your homes but wanted to see an improvement in our repairs and maintenance service, including how we communicate.

We did

Over the past 12 months our repairs and maintenance service has been working hard to make our repairs and maintenance service better and improve the customer experience.

- We focused on building and training a new customer-focused team.
- We made improvements to our repairs management systems and processes.
- We have improved Customer Contact Centre call handling and improved communication with both customers and staff.
- We have also improved our response to complaints and feedback and have used this feedback to improve the service and hold contractors to account. We have also produced a new "Code of Contractors Code of Conduct" policy. This can be found on our website.
- We are committed to delivering a great service and improving satisfaction. We have recently selected new contractors and at the heart of our work we aim to improve the speed and the quality of repairs and overall satisfaction. The new contracts were put in place in October 2021.



Are you satisfied that your rent and service charges provide value for money?

(Unsupported customers only)



58%

Overall Satisfaction

We know that ASB can be a problem for some customers. We've committed to preventing ASB wherever possible and where it does occur, responding and working with partners to resolve it as quickly as we can.

What we've done

In December 2020 we reviewed and relaunched our **Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure**. As a result there is now a greater emphasis on resolving disputes locally for low and medium level issues, where neighbours are encouraged to resolve matters informally. More serious ASB complaints may require more mediation, good neighbour agreements and multi-agency meetings.

The emphasis of the refreshed approach is to help a customer keep their tenancy wherever possible, with the threat of eviction being the last possible course of action.

What now?

- We will introduce a new customer service standards framework to improve customer service across Look Ahead
- We are monitoring ASB and our response
- We are publishing performance data on our website



SECTION 4 – Diversity and Inclusion

At Look Ahead we value all of our customers and see them as equal partners in our work. All voices are valid and we will continue to listen and respect all. We look to make sure that all our customers feel safe and protected.

This means making sure they are not treated poorly based on age, disability, gender, race or any other attributes protected by law.

We tailor our services for our customers' individual needs and work closely with our staff team locally to be sure that our services do not treat anyone unfairly.

Are you satisfied that Look Ahead treats you fairly regardless of your age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, disability or religion?

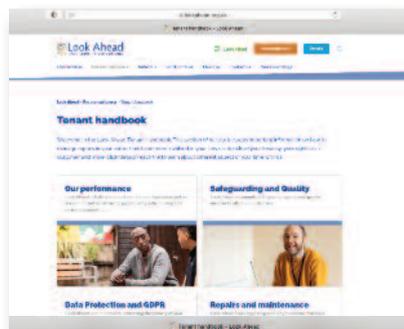


In 2019, our team worked together to develop Look Ahead's Diversity and Inclusion strategy and action plan. This includes our approach and guidelines for accommodating and supporting transgender customers and those transitioning.

We also made a commitment to regularly seek feedback on how customers felt Look Ahead treated them in relation to their protected characteristics.

Look Ahead is being inclusive in lots of other ways. We have recently updated our customer website to include an online 'Tenant Handbook'. The online handbook provides a central, easily-accessible place where customers are able to independently find out the key information that they need as a Look Ahead

customer. The Tenant Handbook includes important information on how to manage repairs in your home, how to be more involved in your service, details of your tenancy, and your rights as a customer.



We are committed to ensuring that our website is accessible to all visitors in a way that suits them. Our website has an assistive digital inclusion tool "Browsealoud" which helps visitors access and understand our content, interact with our website independently and with ease. It particularly benefits people who have hidden disabilities, such as dyslexia

and individuals with literacy challenges, visual impairments and non-English speakers.

Functionality includes:

- Text-to-speech 
- Translation – written and spoke
- Text Magnification
- Mp3 generation – converts text into an MP3 audio file
- Screen mask- blocks distractions
- Settings customisation to allow individual needs and preferences

Removing barriers to involvement

During the pandemic we moved to virtual TALP meetings and supported customers to stay involved. We are committed to continuing to use virtual technologies to remove any barriers such as location or childcare.

Looking Forward

- We are investing "Big word" translation services to make sure staff and customer have access to translation support.
- We have set up our Tenant Handbook online www.lookahead.org.uk/tenanthandbook but are making a physical copy of the Tenant Handbook too to make it easier for all to read.
- Customers will help us to review and develop policies and procedures.
- We will continue to encourage, reward and recognise customer involvement and engagement and to remove any possible issues that might stand in the way of involvement.



SECTION 5 – Covid-19

How satisfied are you with the support and communication from Look Ahead during the Covid-19 pandemic?



89%
Overall Satisfaction

During the uncertainty of the pandemic, your welfare was our main priority.

As a team, we:

- Made a plan that was managed by our senior team to make sure staff and customers were kept safe
- Brought in volunteers to support services under pressure
- Focused on customer welfare
- Maintained our repairs throughout the lockdowns
- Our Food Donations Team got and shared hundreds of food donations to our customers from companies across London.

Contacted
310
unsupported
customers

Distributed over
£100,000
worth of in-kind
donations



SECTION 6 – Quality of our services

Look Ahead is committed to delivering high quality services which are designed to support the best outcomes for our customers. We do all we can to involve our customers in improving services.

How satisfied are you with the choice and control you have over the support you received from Look Ahead
(Supported customers only)



88%
Overall Satisfaction

Quality Rating of Services - from our internal audit process

9%

Outstanding

88%

Good

3%

Requires Improvement





By the end of the year, **91% of our services had been rated as 'outstanding' or 'good'** by the internal quality programme, with 9% of services requiring improvement.

All services have to complete monthly plans to show how they address any issues identified in the audits.

To support our staff with audits we have a team of

6 volunteer customer quality checkers.

These volunteers are either current or former customers, or people who have lived experience of living in services like those provided by Look Ahead. In the year leading up to the pandemic, Quality Checkers participated in more than 40% of audits, but during the various lockdowns this has not been possible.

Since early 2021, we have started to use Quality

Checkers again in conducting interviews virtually and we will ensure that they return to in person visits as soon as it is safe to do so.

In addition to our own audits, some of our services are inspected by local authorities or by the Care Quality Commission who regulate around 12 of our services.

All of our CQC services are currently rated as good.

Looking Forward

We aim to involve Quality Checkers in over 40% of our quality audits going forward. To do this we will recruit and train more customers to get involved. We will also ensure that customers' feedback and experiences are highlighted in all written reports.

SECTION 7 – Customer Services

In addition to the annual survey, we regularly use feedback, positive and negative, from customers to improve our services.

We received 922 complaints between April 2020 and the end of December 2021. **67%** were formal complaints (that is in writing) and **33%** were resolved informally.

Here's how these were broken down

18%

ASB

22%

Repairs and maintenance

20%

Unsatisfactory service

20%

Unsatisfactory treatment

5%

Unsatisfactory treatment by other Landlord/Agency

15%

Other



We have a comprehensive complaints improvement plan and in response to your feedback we have:

- Improved and relaunched our complaints and feedback policy. A copy can be found on our website
- Developed a complaint training course for all staff and a managers' course for those investigating and responding to complaints
- After a stage 1 complaint we give every complainant the opportunity to complete a complaints satisfaction survey and we use the feedback to improve the service
- We have also introduced a quality assurance framework and since January 2021 we quality assure 10% of complaints each month and use this to improve local and organisational responses to complaints and feedback.

Getting in touch



Our dedicated Customer Contact Centre receives on average **1200 calls a month.**

You said

In early 2020 customers and staff told us that they had difficulties getting through to the call centre, a high rate of calls weren't picked up, the introductory recorded message was too long and the call handlers were not always helpful.

We did

Over the past 19 months we have recruited a new customer service lead and improved call handling. We made our telephone system and call options easier making it faster to get through to a call handler.

We've also recruited and trained a customer-focused team.

We are grateful for your feedback and will continue to report back and keep you updated on what we do. If you would like more information or would like to get involved, please get in touch by **GetInTouch@lookahead.org.uk**