

Heads-Up

Your quarterly Look Ahead customer newsletter. Summer 2025

A note from Sharron, this edition's Guest Editor

I'm pleased to introduce you to this new edition of Heads-Up, Look Ahead's quarterly customer newsletter, edited by customers.



You can read about what's going on at Look Ahead. You can also find out about how you can get involved and have your say here.

As a customer myself, I know how important it is to make sure our voices are heard.

There are lots of ways to do this at Look Ahead, either at your service, home, or with the Co-Production Team.

You may like to join a customer panel and share your views, or become a quality checker, and visit different services and interview other customers. You can ask about what they like and what they think could be better. I've done both of these, and it feels amazing to make a difference to others.

Many thanks,

Sharron

Guest Editor

Contents

Cuppa corner	2
Meet Look Ahead's artists	3
Panel updates	4
Notice board	5
Fun and games	6



**FIND OUT
MORE**

To find out more about these opportunities, speak to your support worker or email the Co-Production Team at gettinginvolved@lookahead.org.uk

Cuppa CORNER

SANDEEP'S STORY



Hi, my name's Sandeep, and I live at Hope Place in Slough. I've gotten involved at Look Ahead. Believe me, it's a fantastic way to build your confidence and help other people.

You can get involved in different ways, it's great! I've joined an interview panel for a position on Look Ahead's board. I asked the candidate questions. I was glad to do it, hiring people who understand our needs is important. After all, we're the ones their decisions affect.

One of my most exciting activities was being a guest speaker at a roundtable organised by Look Ahead, the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the National Housing Federation. My support worker put me forward because I speak well in customer meetings at Hope Place. I'm glad she did, I enjoy public speaking. Sharing my experiences with the audience was fantastic, I helped them understand how to make services better for other people. I felt like a pundit giving expert analysis. I'd be keen to do it again, it was amazing.

You can use your talents to help others too. Why not consider volunteering at Look Ahead?



Sandeep with fellow panellists at the roundtable event.

£20
HIGH STREET
VOUCHER

We want to hear your stories. Send your story to gettinginvolved@lookahead.org.uk – if we publish it, we will give you a £20 voucher.

LAUREN'S STORY



Lauren first came to Look Ahead as a customer. Years later, she joined our staff team and now manages a learning disability service.

I first came across Look Ahead when I was 17, as a customer in a young people's service. My experience was very positive. The staff were consistent, I felt stable, secure, I could speak to them at any time. Most importantly they involved me in my own care. It was empowering. I learnt to advocate for myself which helped me move on quickly.

I rediscovered Look Ahead years later after chatting to my neighbour who worked here. I'd been a home care worker before, so I applied for a support worker role at a learning disability service and got it.

I learned what good care is as a customer here, and I've always supported others just the same. I recently took on my current role as manager at Luton Road Learning Disability Service in Newham. It's beautiful. My customers are settled, happy and have a fantastic relationship with the staff. These are Look Ahead's values, and I share them too.

My advice to any customers is get involved however you can, you never know where it may lead!

Meet Look Ahead's artists

Customers from Look Ahead's Felstead Street Service in Hackney enjoy therapeutic art classes with local painter and artist John Close. The group have made beautiful artworks of their own and displayed them in a public exhibition.

Some of the customers have shared what art means for them:

Monica "Art is a break from city life. Creating projects helps me focus."

John "I've knitted since age seven, I make crochet scarves with coordinating colours. Displaying my work publicly was lovely."

Sahib "I find pictures of historical buildings in books and copy them with pencils. I like details, shapes, domes, columns, arches. I really enjoy working on my projects."



PANEL UPDATES



Tenant and Landlord Panel (TALP)

In February, Look Ahead's Tenant and Landlord Panel met to talk about how we can make our housing services better. This time, we talked about who is responsible for repairs in buildings we don't own, how we deal with complaints, and how we keep people updated.

Tenants shared honest feedback and helped shape ideas for improvement, staff training, simplifying repairs info, and making communication clearer.

Our next Tenant and Landlord Panel meeting is 7th October, 1pm at our Head Office in Islington. If you'd like to join the panel or find out more, please email us on gettinginvolved@lookahead.org.uk or speak to your support worker.

Nahshon *"I like to share my views and what it's like to live in Look Ahead services, as well as hearing what it's like for other people. We help to put issues right, and it gives Senior Management the chance to understand where we're coming from and what it's like for us."*



Customer Incidents Panel (CIP)

Some time ago, one of our founding Customer Incidents Panel members had a brilliant idea: bring everyone involved in safeguarding at Look Ahead together in one room. The goal? To share experience, learn from one another, and come up with ideas. Safeguarding is about keeping you safe and free from harm.

In February, we were excited to finally make this happen and host our first ever joint Safeguarding Learning Event, organised from the start by the Panel and Look Ahead staff.

The event brought together different people: members of our Customer Incidents Panel (CIP), Heads of Service, the Safeguarding & Quality team, Senior Leadership, and members of the Board.

CIP members shared their experiences and thoughts, followed by a presentation from the team on safeguarding themes over the past year.

In small groups we talked about financial abuse, keeping customers safe, professional boundaries, empowering customers, and encouraging people to speak up. Each group shared ideas and practical suggestions for how Look Ahead can improve.

If you feel unsafe or someone is harming or upsetting you, tell a member of staff, call 0333 010 4600, or email safeguarding@lookahead.org.uk

For more information on how to join CIP, please email gettinginvolved@lookahead.org.uk

NOTICE BOARD

Look Ahead Futures Fund Bursaries

Are you aged 16-24? Interested in employment, training, and education opportunities?

If so, you can apply to the **Look Ahead Futures Fund**. You could get a **£500 bursary** to spend on tools, travel, equipment, materials, courses and more for a job, volunteering, or an educational programme.

To find out more about the bursaries, please speak to your support worker or email YPBursary@lookahead.org.uk



CHANGES TO BENEFITS



Many Look Ahead customers are being asked by the DWP to change their benefits to Universal Credit. All our customers who live in a supported service will need to continue to claim Housing Benefit, but we are finding that Housing Benefit claims are sometimes being stopped by mistake.

Only unsupported tenants need to claim Universal Credit housing costs.

If you need help with moving to Universal Credit please contact your support worker or AmandaMole@lookahead.org.uk Look Ahead's Income Manager on 0207 368 4877.

COMPLIMENTS



COMMENTS



COMPLAINTS



Want to give feedback or make a complaint?

Tell your support worker or the service manager or contact Look Ahead's Feedback and Complaints Team on feedback@lookahead.org.uk or call 0333 010 4600.

Social housing issue? Escalate it.



Social Housing Rights

Moving into social housing? Everyone deserves a safe and secure home. Know your rights. Visit gov.uk/social-housing

FUN & GAMES

WORD SEARCH

The listed words can all be found in the grid - running forwards, backwards, up, down or diagonally.

summer

sunny

beach

s	s	r	c	w	r	v
m	u	g	m	d	n	b
j	n	m	o	e	e	c
n	n	o	m	a	q	d
q	y	r	c	e	t	o
w	v	h	n	q	r	k
j	d	s	m	x	k	r

A JOKE FOR YOU



Patient: Doctor, doctor! I feel like a pair of curtains

Doctor: Pull yourself together!

QUIZ QUESTION

CORONATION ST.

Who is the longest-running character in Coronation Street?

(Answer at the bottom of the page)

Editorial Team: Sharron, Nahshon, Louise, Asim, Kate and Edward.

Look Ahead
CARE, SUPPORT AND HOUSING

Get involved at Look Ahead:
gettinginvolved@lookahead.org.uk

Email Look Ahead: getintouch@lookahead.org.uk

Call Look Ahead: 0333 010 4600

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(Answer: Ken Barlow)