

Heads-Up

Your quarterly Look Ahead customer newsletter. Autumn 2025

Listening, learning & improving special



A note from John, this edition's Guest Editor

Thank you for allowing me to be the Guest Editor for this latest issue of Heads-Up.

I'd like to focus on the importance of talking, and hope that this issue will spark new conversations and ideas within our community.

We do this where I live by having a weekly coffee morning. Every Friday for an hour we get together and sit and chat. Sometimes we go on outings which last for longer. Our last trip took us on a boat trip along the Thames to Greenwich.

One of the biggest ways in which coffee mornings help is that whilst everyone has shared lived experiences which has led us to Look Ahead, we also have many different life experiences. Everyone supports each other with life and its problems.

So, in the words of the TV campaign – *Stop the Silence, Start the Conversation*. Why not start a coffee morning in your project?

John

Guest Editor

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John is in the middle



**FIND OUT
MORE**

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

lookahead.org.uk

 **Look Ahead**
CARE, SUPPORT AND HOUSING

CHARLES' STORY

Charles from our Lester Court service in Tower Hamlets, shared his story of living more independently, and his passion for aeroplanes, in an interview with Sharron and Diane from the Heads-Up team. (pictured below)



I'm Charles, and I live at Lester Court. I like it here. I've got good staff and neighbours. I get support to be independent and live how I want.

I can travel alone and can come and go as I please. I just tell the staff where I'm going.

I like keeping my mind occupied. I relax, play games on my PS5 and go out to Westfield for things I enjoy, like Lego.

I've always been interested in planes too, so one day, my support worker took me to London City Airport. He showed me how to get there, and now I go by myself three times a week. I get the bus to Canning Town, then another from there. I often bring lunch and take photos of the planes.

I watch the planes taking off and landing. I like the British Airways planes, the Swiss ones with red tails, and the propellers on the smaller ones too.

Being able to do this means a lot, it makes me really happy.

JADE'S STORY



Jade lived at Look Ahead's Anerley Station Road Young People Service. She has since moved on and runs her own business.

When I came to Anerley Station Road it felt right. I had my own space, and privacy. To be honest, I had the best time.

Following the rules was hard at first. But the staff were patient with me, and kind, I was treated like a young adult, not a child. The support workers taught me to be independent in the right way, how to cook, clean, and manage relationships. They put me in touch with a psychiatrist and helped me spend time with my sister, which really improved my mental health.

The service encouraged me to go to beauty college and take nail and lash courses. I used what I learnt to start my own business in south London called Dollhouse London, and now I'm a professional beautician with 700 clients, I sell beauty products too.

I've moved into my own flat as well. Before Look Ahead, I could only have dreamed of a life like this.

My advice to other customers is, Look Ahead's the best care you're gonna get, don't be afraid to work with them. Look what I've achieved, you can do something too.

£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.

PEER SUPPORT

Could you be a peer support volunteer?

Did you know you can use your life experiences to help others? We can train you to support people in our services who may have faced similar challenges.

As a peer support volunteer (PSV), you can make a real difference to someone's life, gain skills and confidence, and feel more ready for work. We have even hired some peer support volunteers as Look Ahead staff members.

Here's how customers and services have benefited from peer support volunteering:

Isa, PSV: *"I've learned that my experiences are a strength."*

Petal, PSV: *Volunteering gave me the opportunity to wake up with a purpose, and help the community. I volunteered for over a year, and put myself forward for a bank support worker job. It's a great opportunity and I'm very grateful.*

Staff from our Livingstone House Service speaking about their PSV Raf:

"Raf has been a huge help at Livingstone House, organising fun activities like table tennis and movie nights for the customers. He's also been a reliable hand with practical tasks like shopping and accompanying customers to appointments."

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



MEET CHRIS,

LOOK AHEAD'S
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Keen to know more about Look Ahead's work, **John and Sharron** from the Heads-Up Editorial Team met with the organisation's **Chief Executive Chris Hampson**, to find out more about him, his motivations, and hopes for the future.

SHARRON: WELCOME EVERYBODY TO CHRIS' INTERVIEW. CHRIS, CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND HOW YOUR CAREER LED YOU HERE?

CHRIS: Gosh, that's a big question. I'm originally from New Zealand. But I came over here many years ago in my 20s, and I ended up staying here and studying.

My very first job in housing was working in the homeless person's unit with rough sleepers in the city. I was working for the council, helping people get housed, and one of the organisations that we tried to get people housed in was Look Ahead.

I later joined Look Ahead about 25 years ago. I worked a lot on policy, strategy and new business. Then in 2015 when our previous chief executive Victoria Stark retired I applied for the job and

was fortunate enough to get the wonderful job of chief executive.

JOHN: WHAT MOTIVATES YOU WHEN YOU'RE AT WORK?

CHRIS: I go on visits to see services to meet the customers and the frontline staff and see what's going on. When I look at the excellent work we do, and when I meet the customers and see the schemes across different client groups, it reminds me what a fantastic organisation we are and how we fill a gap in delivering services to people who might otherwise not receive them.

And that's what motivates me and keeps me going.

SHARRON: DO YOU LIKE YOUR JOB?

CHRIS: There's ups and downs, with the job. But overall I really do love it. The ups way outweigh the downs with the job and you know, when I go and see services that we run and the fantastic work we're doing with local government or the NHS, and when I meet customers who've come into our services and often leave living much more independent lives than they did, I get a real buzz.

JOHN: WHAT DOES A DAY LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

CHRIS: Well, no, two days are usually the same. Some days there are board meetings, or meetings with my fellow executives. We look at all the challenges. We look at how the organisation is performing, what's going well, what's going not so well.

I often talk to staff about finances, contracts, and properties, and I talk to local authorities about new partnerships. I go to services, and sometimes my work is quite externally facing, so I have to be an ambassador for Look Ahead, attending and speaking at events, and meeting with policy makers and government. So it's a huge variety. I think that's one of the huge joys of running Look Ahead.

SHARRON: SO WHAT DOES THE FUTURE OF LOOK AHEAD LOOK LIKE?

CHRIS: I think the future is really exciting. I think you'll see on the news, there's a lot about the pressures on the NHS, and how people, in hospital when they should no longer be in hospital need to be discharged more quickly.

We're working so people who don't need to go into hospital or don't need to be kept in the hospital, can come and live in a supported living scheme that we run. People are generally much happier living in their homes than an institution, and so the future really is about us providing those services in the community.

JOHN: YOUR LAST QUESTION IS, WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

CHRIS: Well, I have a pretty busy life outside work. I have three boys, two still quite young. I'm ferrying them around to different activities. I like to keep active too. I do a lot of swimming and cycling. I also try and go back to New Zealand once or twice a year, whenever I can to see my mum.

JOHN: THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ANSWERING OUR QUESTIONS CHRIS.

CHRIS: Thank you John, thank you Sharron.



If you enjoyed this interview, you can scan this QR code for a video recording of the full interview.

PANEL UPDATES



What's been happening at the Tenant and Landlord Panel (TALP)?

At the June meeting, we came together to talk about what's working and what needs improving in our homes.

We reviewed our complaints improvement plan and shared the results from our latest customer surveys. We talked a lot about how to make communication clearer, especially by cutting out jargon and using plain English. One of our ideas was to make a new video to better explain what we do as a panel.

Our next meeting will be 7th October at our Head Office in Islington. If you're interested in joining the Tenant and Landlord Panel or finding out more, please email us on gettinginvolved@lookahead.org.uk or talk to a member of staff

Customer Incidents Panel (CIP) – What You Need to Know

At the latest meeting, we looked at how incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) are reported. We agreed that clearer forms and better follow-up are needed. There's a new Anti-Social Behaviour policy coming soon that we gave our feedback on, along with information about how you can report ASB more easily.

We also discussed domestic abuse with our London Domestic Abuse Advice Service (DAAS) team. London DAAS supports anyone in a Look Ahead service who may be experiencing or worried about domestic abuse. This can be emotional, physical, financial or any other kind of abuse. We also had a myth-busting quiz and shared ideas for how staff can support residents better.

Referrals to London DAAS can be made by staff, customers themselves, or support workers via phone **0207 515 1843** or email LondonDAASreferrals@lookahead.org.uk

We're planning more ways for you to help shape policies, so if you've got ideas or want to get involved, keep an eye out for updates!



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



The Better Outcomes, Support and Services (BOSS) Project

BOSS is about building better support together. It stands for **Better Outcomes, Support and Services**, and it's our new way of working with you to make sure the support you get is shaped by your strengths, your goals, and what matters most to you.

We want to make sure your voices are at the heart of the BOSS project, so we created BOSS Builders, a customer group who are helping to shape the project.

Our first BOSS Builders meeting took place at head office at the end of July. It was a chance for everyone to get to know the BOSS team, learn more about the project, and talk about how we'll work together. We also enjoyed a creative activity making group art together, which you can see below!

Our next meeting is coming up soon. We'll be talking about support plans so we can make sure the new plans are useful and meet everyone's needs. We're excited to see how the group will make an impact. and will keep sharing updates with you all!



LISTENING, LEARNING, IMPROVING

What you told us in 2024/25

This year, **over 500 of you took part in our customer satisfaction surveys**. In one of the surveys that we sent to some of you, you told us your views about Look Ahead based on **Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)**. Collecting TSM feedback is something every social landlord must do every year. This section of Heads-Up will tell you more about what you've told us, and what we're doing to improve.

78.9%

In our TSM survey overall satisfaction reached 78.9%, with strong scores across key areas like repairs, safety, and communication. *But we know there's more to do, and we always want to do better.*

What is working well

Safe and well-maintained homes matter.



78.4%
of you feel safe



76%
satisfied with
upkeep

Feeling respected and informed is key.



81%
of you feel treated
fairly



80%
say we keep you
updated on things
that matter.

If you want more information about our TSM results or our performance in other areas, you can find this by scanning the [QR code](#), or visiting this link:

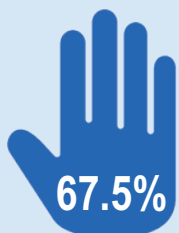
<https://www.lookahead.org.uk/for-our-customers/tenant-handbook/our-performance/>



Where we are improving



- **Satisfaction with complaints handling** grew to **58.9%**, but it's still one of the lowest-rated areas. We've launched a new improvement plan to make things better. It's also a topic that we're discussing at all future **Tenant and Landlord Panel** meetings. This will make sure we're keeping on track.



- **Satisfaction with anti-social behaviour** (ASB) handling dropped to **67.5%**. We are tackling this through a dedicated antisocial behaviour improvement plan, as well as working with our **Customer Incidents Panel** to provide feedback on our ASB policy and procedures.



- **Overall satisfaction with repairs was** was **76%**, and **69%** of you were satisfied with the time taken to complete repairs. To help us improve, we changed contractors, and have had customers involved in helping us choose new contractors for planned works.

What we are also doing



- **Improving homes:** We will create physical tenant handbooks with everything you need to know about repairs, responsibilities, and who to speak to about them.



- **More visible staff:** Senior leaders will visit services regularly, and our **Better Outcomes, Support and Services** project aims to reduce admin time for staff, so they're in the office less and have more time with you.



- **Better communication:** We've set up a new customer-led group to make '**Heads-Up**' which we will send you seasonally. We're also making it easier to find information on our website.



A vital message for Black men at Look Ahead



Ike Anyanwu is a service manager, and the lead of Look Ahead's staff Cultural Diversity Network with a special message about Black men's prostate health.

As the lead of Look Ahead's Cultural Diversity Network and being over 45 years old myself, I believe it is our shared community responsibility to raise awareness among Black men at Look Ahead to take action on their prostate health now!

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men in the UK, but Black men face a much higher risk. Figures show that **1 in 4 Black men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime**, compared to 1 in 8 white men. Alarmingly, **Black men are also twice as likely to die from it.**



Catching it early saves lives

Catching prostate cancer early can dramatically improve outcomes. Unfortunately, Black men are often diagnosed at later stages and are less likely to receive life-saving treatments. **It's crucial to take action now.**

What you can do

- 1. Talk to your GP from age 45:** If you're a Black man aged 45 or older, ask your GP about your risk and discuss having a PSA blood test, even if you don't have symptoms at the moment.
- 2. Know your family history:** A family history of prostate cancer can more than double your risk, especially if it involves a father or brother—or even breast cancer in your mother or sister.
- 3. Use the online risk checker & support services:** Prostate Cancer UK offers a quick 30-second risk checker and a team of specialist nurses to guide you. Call **0800 074 8383** or visit their website for resources that are specially made for Black men.

What's next?

- **Book a GP Appointment:** If you're Black and 45 or older, book that conversation with your GP.
- **Share the Message:** Talk openly with staff and others at your service, neighbours, friends, family, and communities. Share the risks and the available tools to help catch prostate cancer early.
- **Participate in Awareness Initiatives:** Look Ahead's Cultural Diversity Network will intensify awareness creation during Black History Month to ensure all Black men in the organisation have the right information to promote self-care.

Together, we can break down barriers, challenge stigma, and protect lives.
Let's make sure every voice is heard, every story matters, and every life has a fighting chance.

NOTICE BOARD

MEET DIANE



Hi, I'm Diane and I am the new Co-Production Officer. I've been a bank support worker at Look Ahead for over 12 years, so we may already know each other.

I will be visiting services to see how you are already getting involved, and how we can help you bring new ideas. If you see me around, please say "hi".

If you would like me to visit your service, tell your support worker or email me on dianedowkes@lookahead.org.uk

NEED EXPERT ADVICE?

Citizens Advice can advise you about different matters such as law and courts, debt, or housing. Find out how they can help on www.citizensadvice.org.uk or call their advice line on **0800 144 8848**.

**citizens
advice**

**Want to give
feedback or make
a complaint?**

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

ARE YOU A YOUNG PERSON?

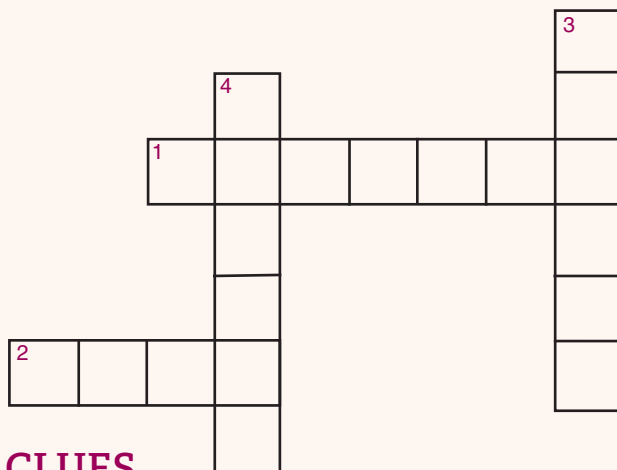
Do you want to help us shape a new and better support plan template?

If yes, we'd love to hear from you. Please speak to a staff member or email Julia at JuliaHarrison@lookahead.org.uk to find out more.



FUN & GAMES

AUTUMN CROSSWORD



CLUES

Across

1. a big orange vegetable
2. American name for autumn

Down

3. a horse chestnut tree's seed
4. leaves make this sound when you walk on them

A JOKE FOR YOU



Question: What do you call a man with a seagull on his head?

Answer: Cliff.

QUIZ QUESTION



What river can be seen in the opening credits of EastEnders?

(Answer at the bottom of the page)

Editorial Team: John, Sharron, Louise, Kate, Diane, and Edward.



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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