



# Community and Partnerships

## 2025 - 2028

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# 1. Introduction

Look Ahead provides specialist supported housing and personalised support to individuals with mental health needs, learning disabilities, experiences of homelessness and complex needs (including domestic abuse) and young people and care leavers.

As both a housing association and support provider, we are committed to working with local, regional, and strategic partners to ensure our customers have safe, welcoming, and comfortable homes and access to the services and opportunities they need to thrive and progress towards independence. This document outlines our partnership and community intentions for 2025–2028 and demonstrates how partnerships underpin the delivery of our mission, vision, and values.

This work is guided by a fundamental principle: knowing and understanding our customers. Through our Customer Insight Strategy, local engagement, co-production, and data collection, we ensure we know who our customers are, what they need, and the local context they live in. This insight informs every aspect of our strategy, shaping our partnerships, service delivery, and the activities we prioritise.

By combining local knowledge with organisational learning, we are able to map customer needs to local and strategic partners, ensuring services are targeted, coordinated, and effective.

Over the next three years (2025–2028), we will strengthen partnerships at local, regional, and strategic levels to ensure all customers live in safe, comfortable homes where they feel welcome, connected, and empowered to thrive in their local communities.

This directly supports Look Ahead's vision, mission, and values:

- **Our Vision:** Building better lives through social care and housing in local communities.
- **Our Mission:** We co-design and deliver services that offer innovative social care solutions and support people to thrive.
- **Our Values:** Excellence and Innovation, Caring and Compassionate, Inclusive and Trusted, Partnership and One-Team.



These strategic intentions should be read alongside Look Ahead's Business Development, Diversity and Inclusion, Fundraising, Asset Management, Customer Experience, and Customer Insight strategies.

## 2. Background and rationale

Look Ahead operates at the intersection of housing, health and social care. As both a specialist landlord and a provider of care and support services, our impact depends on strong partnerships. Collaboration with local authorities, NHS bodies, other housing associations and a wide range of community and specialist partners positions us as a trusted partner in an increasingly integrated system.

Partnerships also help us maintain and improve our housing stock. By working with developers, contractors and other landlords, we can deliver services in high-quality buildings tailored to meet customers' specialist and often complex needs. At the same time, partnerships enable us to deliver joined-up, person-centred support within those homes, driving better outcomes and demonstrating our impact to commissioners and regulators.

Finally, our partnerships help to extend our influence. They open up opportunities for joint service delivery as well as new funding opportunities and help us to amplify our voice in shaping the future of supported housing. Embedding partnerships into our range of organisational strategies ensures Look Ahead can continue to grow sustainably, deliver high-quality homes and support, and remain a leader in the supported housing sector.

## 3. Alignment with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) standards

This strategy aligns with the RSH's Neighbourhood and Community Standard by ensuring tenants live in safe, well-managed, and inclusive communities. Risks such as anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, and hate crime are proactively addressed through partnerships with local authorities, police, safeguarding boards, and community organisations, strengthening safety, cohesion, and the quality of shared environments.

It also meets the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard by embedding meaningful tenant involvement in service and organisational decision-making. Customers participate through our co-production programme, peer support programmes, and cross-organisational panels, with their lived experience shaping our policies, service design and improvements.



## 4. Strategic Priorities (2025–2028)

### 1. Partnerships to meet customers' specialist needs

We are committed to ensuring that customers with complex or specialist needs have timely access to the right support, enabling them to recover, thrive, and move towards greater independence. Our partnerships will provide integrated, person-centred care across mental health, substance misuse, learning disabilities, trauma, homelessness, domestic abuse, physical health needs and other complex needs.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Partnering with specialist services in mental health, substance misuse, learning disabilities, and physical health to deliver coordinated support.
- Working with organisations supporting people experiencing homelessness, trauma, abuse, or relationship breakdown to provide tailored interventions and continuity of support.
- Developing pathways with services for young people, care leavers, and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to ensure early, appropriate access to support.
- Collaborating with domestic abuse services, safeguarding boards, and trauma-informed practitioners to strengthen protective factors and recovery outcomes.
- Embedding holistic, trauma-informed approaches across all partnerships to address multiple needs
- Sharing data and learning with partners to improve case coordination, wrap-around support, and long-term outcomes.

**Outcomes:** Customers receive coordinated support and holistic care, resulting in improved well-being, increased stability, and greater progress towards independence.

**Example in practice:** At our specialist mental health services for young people in West London, staff training and development have been developed and delivered by specialist psychiatrists, whilst a young people's mental health charity works alongside us to ensure our support is trauma-informed and reflects what our customers need and want from mental health provision.

## Strategic Priorities (2025–2028)

### 2. Partnerships with our customers through co-production

We will empower customers to actively shape the services they receive, strengthen trust, and ensure services reflect lived experience, needs, and aspirations.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Involving customers in recruitment, staff training, auditing, and customer voice panels.
- Operating structured peer support programmes that promote community, shared learning, and mutual support.
- Engaging customers in co-design of our services, policies, and initiatives, ensuring their lived experiences inform delivery.
- Creating accessible feedback mechanisms and forums for customers to voice ideas, concerns, and recommendations.
- Using insight from customer participation to improve services, enhance accessibility, and improve outcomes.

**Outcomes:** Customers have more agency and are empowered around the services they access. Services are more responsive and effective; trust is strengthened, leading to improved satisfaction, engagement, and long-term outcomes.

**Example in practice:** We train peer support volunteers who provide peer support to customers across our services based on their own lived experience. Customers recently attended a Royal College of Psychiatrists roundtable event where they spoke to senior clinicians about their experiences of hospital discharge, and customers regularly speak at partner fundraising events, demonstrating the impact their support has had.



## Strategic Priorities (2025–2028)

### 3. Landlord Partnerships

We will endeavour to strengthen our position as a landlord by building strong partnerships that deliver high-quality, well-maintained homes that meet customers' specialist needs within safer communities. By collaborating across the housing sector, we ensure tenants live in secure, supportive environments that support their wellbeing and recovery.

#### We will aim to:

- Collaborate with local authorities, commissioners, and other landlords to provide and manage high-quality homes that meet specialist needs and provide psychologically informed environments.
- Partner with police, community safety teams, and safeguarding boards to address anti-social behaviour, hate crime, and domestic abuse.
- Engage tenants in decisions about repairs, maintenance, and communal improvements, including ensuring contractors deliver social value.
- Ensure transparency for our customers by providing clear information about our landlord services and how partnerships support them.

**Outcomes:** Our customers benefit from safe, high-quality housing, stronger community engagement, and timely access to support services.

**Example in practice:** Look Ahead, customers have been involved in the selection of small works contractors to help improve the quality of local maintenance works. Customer volunteers from our Customer Incidents Panel also co-designed and hosted a safeguarding event with staff, focusing on recognising and preventing abuse, how to keep customers safe, and ways Look Ahead can improve.



## Strategic Priorities (2025–2028)

### 4. Local-level community partnerships

We will build strong local partnerships so customers can access the full range of services and opportunities within their communities, promoting inclusion, resilience, and independence.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Mapping local services and resources, including food banks, leisure facilities, and employability programmes.
- Ensuring customers have access to local community information and resources.
- Training staff to understand and utilise these resources for effective signposting and referrals.
- Supporting customers to access services, including accompaniment, translation support, and peer support to overcome barriers.
- Building and maintaining relationships with local agencies to enable joint initiatives and coordinated referral pathways.
- Sharing learning from local engagement to inform service planning and strengthen community impact.

**Outcomes:** Customers can access timely, appropriate support and opportunities in their communities, leading to increased engagement, independence, and well-being.

**Example in practice:** Our partnership with the Felix Project enables us to offer food bank and drop services at a number of services across East London, whilst our Future Funds Bursary scheme, delivered in partnership with LandAid, enables young people to access financial bursaries to support them towards their education, training and employment goals.



## Strategic Priorities (2025–2028)

### 5. Health partnerships

We will aim to improve the physical and mental well-being of our customers while reducing pressure on health services by delivering integrated, accessible, and proactive health support within our housing and community settings.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Partnering with NHS trusts, health alliances, and local health providers to deliver integrated, person-centred health services.
- Operating crisis houses with on-site clinicians as alternatives to inpatient care, providing timely intervention for customers experiencing mental health crises or complex health needs.
- Providing on-site clinics and tailored health services for older rough sleepers and other vulnerable groups, in partnership with health, end-of-life care, and community health teams.
- Supporting customers with chronic physical health conditions, substance misuse issues, or co-occurring mental health challenges through proactive case management and multi-agency care plans.

**Outcomes:** Customers experience improved physical and mental health, enhanced wellbeing, and greater independence, while health services benefit from reduced hospital admissions and more coordinated care.

**Example in practice:** At our crisis houses, hospital discharge services and neighbourhood mental health services across East London, on-site clinicians work alongside NHS teams to prevent hospital admissions and deliver holistic, integrated mental health care where and when people need them. Whilst at our homelessness and complex needs service in Westminster, we deliver an on-site health clinic with local clinicians to support the health needs of older, entrenched rough sleepers.



## Strategic Priorities (2025–2028)

### 6. Housing, community safety and prevention of harm

We will ensure customers live in high-quality, well-managed homes within safe, supportive communities by strengthening landlord services, preventing and responding to abuse, and addressing anti-social behaviour.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Collaborating with local authorities and other landlords to provide and manage well-maintained homes.
- Partnering with police, community safety teams, safeguarding boards, and specialist services to prevent and respond to domestic abuse, hate crime, and ASB.
- Engaging residents in repairs, maintenance, communal improvements, and neighbourhood safety initiatives.
- Enhancing neighbourhood management through environmental improvements, safety initiatives, and joint estate inspections
- Providing clear, transparent information about landlord services, safety measures, and partnerships.
- Monitoring and reporting on incidents and interventions to ensure continuous improvement.
- Delivering our asset management strategy

**Outcomes:** Tenants live in safe, high-quality homes; communities are supported and protected, and customers have timely access to specialist services, resulting in improved wellbeing, confidence, and satisfaction.

**Example in practice:** At our homelessness and complex needs service, our on-site neighbourhood management officer employed by the local community works closely with the local police, the community safety team, staff and residents to reduce ASB and improve the safety of the environment. Whilst our London DAAS (Domestic Abuse Advice Service) provides specialist support to any customer across Look Ahead impacted by domestic abuse, raises awareness and upskills staff across the organisation.

## Strategic Priorities (2025–2028)

### 7. Social inclusion, creative and social value partnerships

We will create opportunities for customers to thrive, build confidence, and improve wellbeing by partnering with funders, employers, education providers, arts organisations, and contractors to deliver added value programmes and opportunities for the individuals we support, tailored to their needs and aspirations.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Partnering with colleges, employers, and training providers to support education, training, and employment.
- Delivering health and wellbeing programmes, including physical activity sessions tailored to customer needs.
- Collaborating with arts organisations to deliver creative projects such as therapeutic dance, music workshops, and arts programmes.
- Enhancing communal gardens and green spaces to support wellbeing.
- Working with funders such as LandAid to refurbish services, provide additional added value programmes and fund specialist staff posts.
- Partnering with contractors to enhance service environments and embed social value and innovation.
- Encouraging our central service teams to volunteer in services to improve the environment and green spaces.

**Outcomes:** Increased customer engagement, improved skills, confidence, independence, wellbeing, enhanced service environments, and embedded social value.

**Example in practice:** Residents at our learning disabilities schemes participate in creative arts workshops in partnership with the Royal Academy of Arts, which has improved confidence, social engagement, and mental well-being. Whilst our AnyBody Can Dance project engages 200 customers from our mental health and learning disabilities services in weekly therapeutic dance sessions, professional workshops and regular showcase performances alongside community partners.



## 5. Using customer insight to inform and deliver this strategy

Look Ahead will build this plan using real insight from the people and communities we support. Our Customer Insight Strategy will guide systematic data collection, enabling us to understand demographics, individual needs, and engagement at both local and organisational levels.

We will use this insight to inform service design, target our resources effectively, and shape partnerships that respond to real community and customer needs. Local learning, including feedback from customers and findings from community mapping exercises, will be applied to continuously refine our approach, ensuring that our partnerships remain relevant, responsive, and evidence-based.

## 6. Monitoring and reporting

Progress will be reported annually to the Board.

We will track key performance indicators across a range of partnership areas, including anti-social behaviour levels, domestic abuse outcomes, health and wellbeing participation, arts and creative engagement, social value delivery, and tenant satisfaction as part of our annual TSMs.

