

 **Look Ahead**
CARE, SUPPORT AND HOUSING

annual review 2020 / 21

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chief executive welcome

Welcome to our 2021 annual report. It has certainly been a year we will all remember for a long time. As CEO of Look Ahead it is common that we say we are proud of staff, but this year the commitment has been outstanding. I would like to start by expressing my heartfelt thanks to everyone across the organisation for their efforts this year.

For me, the pandemic has really demonstrated the robustness of our business continuity plans. It has been a year of strength in partnership working as many of our existing partners, and new ones, came together to support our customers. This has included local authority commissioners and social care teams, NHS Trusts, but also corporates and charitable trusts who have supported our work.

While business growth and improvement projects have been delayed in some areas, we have still continued to make strong progress against our corporate strategy. Since lockdown was lifted in April 2021 we've seen significant activity and opportunities for Look Ahead.

Look Ahead continues to deliver a unique offer around health, housing and social care integration, and we have seen some positive changes in this area as a result of the pandemic. Firstly, we have seen a recognition of the value of the social care workforce alongside NHS staff. Secondly, there has been a step-change in commissioning in an integrated way. We have seen NHS Trusts reaching out to us to help them with challenges they have faced this year. I believe that the roll out of Integrated Care Systems will provide the framework that is needed to build upon these partnerships, and to really create lasting change.

The launch of our Europe Economics report this year (see page 28) found that integrated mental health pathways could deliver £1 billion in cost savings to the NHS, as well as positive benefits for customers. This type of saving will be much needed over the coming years as we feel the impact of the pandemic on public finances.

Finally I would like to publically thank our outgoing Chair, Julie Jones. Her leadership, support and commitment has been unswerving. Julie departs Look Ahead at a point where we are in a good position to continue to thrive and grow and to provide services for another 50 years to those who most need them.

Thank you once again to everyone who has supported our work this year.

CHRIS HAMPSON
Chief Executive



who we are

Our mission

Working with people to make choices, achieve goals and take control of their lives through high quality care, support and housing.

Our values

- excellence
- aspiration
- partnership
- trust



What we do

Look Ahead is a specialist housing association and provider of tailor-made care, support and accommodation services.

We support thousands of people across London and the South East with a diverse range of needs, helping them to make individual choices, achieve goals, and take control of their own lives. As part of the Look Ahead Group we also own two learning disability services – Blythson Limited in Kent, and Kingswood Care Services Limited in Essex.

With the right support, we know that our customers can realise their dreams and aspirations. Our customers are experts by experience; by encouraging individuals to identify and develop their own unique skills and abilities, we can support them to bring about positive change in their own lives and those of the people around them.

Who do we work with?

With nearly 50 years in social care under our belt, we are experts through both practice and understanding.

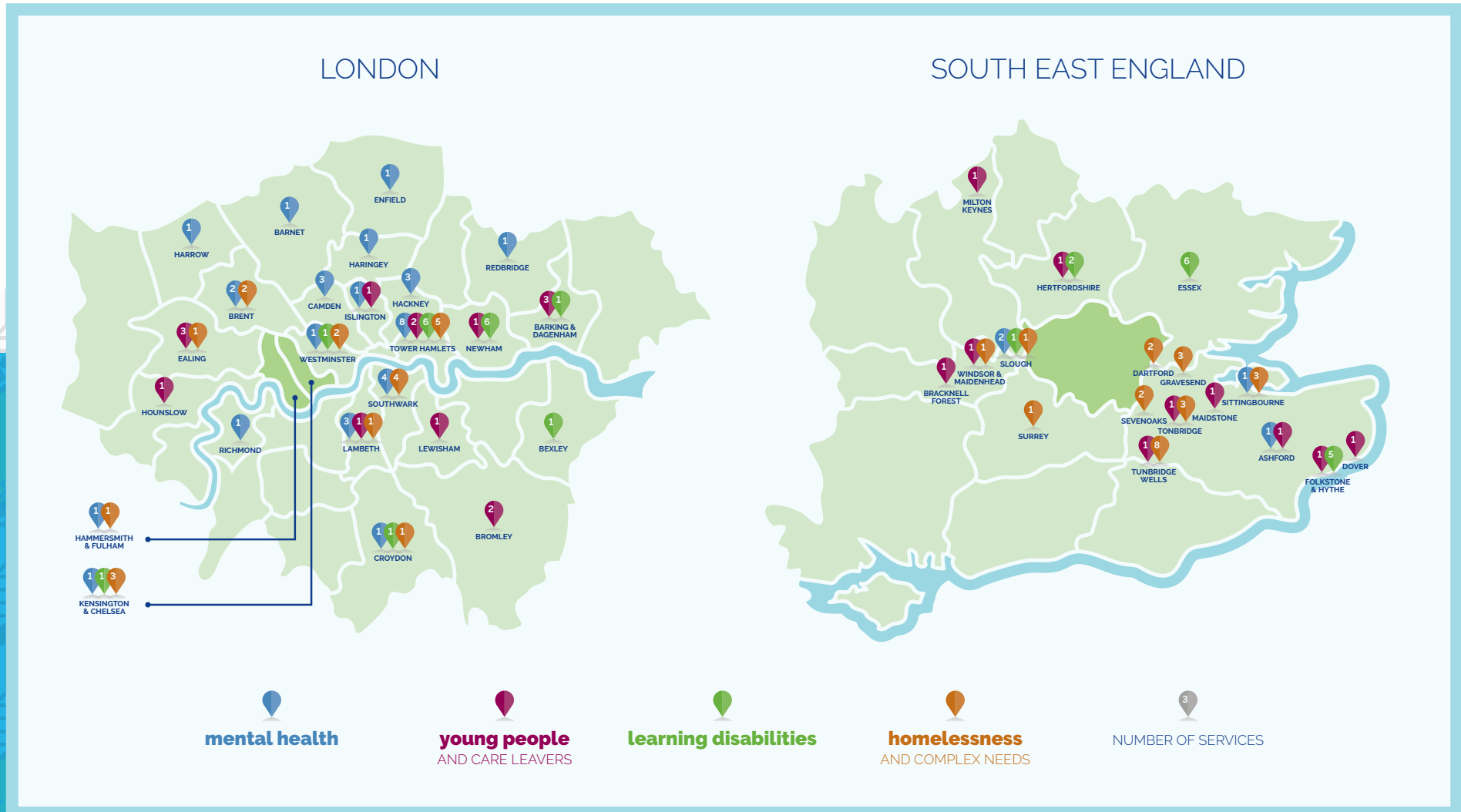
Today, we are proud to be the trusted partner of over 39 local authorities and health trusts, providing specialist support and care services for around 6000 people every year with a wide range of needs, including:

- **Mental health**
- **Learning disabilities**
- **Homelessness and complex needs**
- **Young people and care leavers**

Whether it's working with someone to achieve a positive change or providing specialist care, Look Ahead's experienced and passionate teams are committed to delivering high quality services across social care, health and housing that support independence.



where we work



a year in numbers

group
turnover

group operating
surplus to invest
in services and
property

investment
in assets and
property

£75.7m

£2.6m

£4.4m

V1 & G1

39

rating from
Regulator of
Social Housing

local
authorities

our services



117 services

20 CQC services, all rated good/outstanding

91% of services rated good or outstanding by our internal quality audit

8 new services

In 2021 Look Ahead delivered 117 services across London and the South East across four specialist client groups.

As an organisation, we provide person-centred services, taking a psychologically informed approach across our learning disability, homelessness, mental health and young people's specialisms.

Our goal is to provide customers with the highest quality service every day, while constantly innovating and growing existing and new services.

Quality

Look Ahead is committed to delivering high quality services, which are designed to support the best outcomes for our customers. We have developed and enhanced our internal quality assurance system, which includes an audit tool to monitor performance against our internal standards. In many areas these standards exceed those of our support service regulator, the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

During the strict lockdown imposed in response to Covid-19, audits were completed virtually, but in-person audits were re-introduced at the earliest opportunity when it was safe for staff and customers.

Following feedback from customers and commissioners, the majority of audits are now conducted unannounced. This ensures we get an accurate view of services on a normal day.

Our programme of using 'quality checkers', customers or former customers who are trained to support auditing, has continued virtually; they are involved in 54% of our quality audits across the organisation. This programme is invaluable to the continual improvement of our services and to achieving the highest quality standards.

This year, our audits rated more than 91% of our services as **Good** or **Outstanding**.

Growth in services

As a result of the pandemic, the market for commissioning was slower than normal as local authorities and health trusts struggled with increasing demand and service disruptions. Despite this, Look Ahead's turnover increased by £3.2 million last year, largely as a result of new block and spot contracts.



Our homelessness services

In response to the pandemic we have extended our services to provide emergency accommodation.

'Everyone in' services

As part of the 'Everyone in' scheme, working with the Greater London Authority (GLA), we have managed two hotel services in South London. We housed more than 260 customers who otherwise would have been on the streets and at increased risk of contracting Covid-19. These services supported people with positive move-on into more permanent accommodation.

East London Apartments

Thanks to a partnership between Look Ahead, Tower Hamlets Council and Peabody, we secured funding via the GLA and the Ministry for Homes, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to transform the former Hackney Road Project into the East London Apartments. This service delivers longer term move-on accommodation for rough sleepers to ensure that

as few people as possible return to the streets from emergency accommodation put in place during Covid-19.

New service in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC)

Look Ahead took over the delivery of Heaney Lodge complex needs homelessness service in the RBKC. This service provides support for up to 43 single adults with housing and complex support needs. The contract has enabled us to work more strategically with commissioners and other partners to provide a range of recovery-oriented accommodation.

Health outreach in Kent

At the end of this financial year, Look Ahead was awarded a contract to create a health outreach service in Kent using allocated funding from the county council's Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) allocation for the Covid-19 pandemic. The service will benefit those who have experienced rough sleeping and help to improve health outcomes. Look Ahead will employ specialist outreach

support staff and set up a health improvement fund, which will assess customers' health needs and provide access to specialist support; promote registration with a GP; educate on the need for Covid-19 vaccinations and improve advocacy on behalf of customers using the health service.

Domestic abuse services expansion

Look Ahead has a team of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) in Kent. The team supports women and men at risk of domestic abuse in several ways, including finding emergency accommodation, installing additional home security for those who wish to remain in their own property and linking survivors with recovery services to help them rebuild their lives. As a result of the growth in domestic abuse during the pandemic, additional funding for IDVA posts was secured in Kent.





The pandemic was a particularly difficult time for children in our domestic abuse services; not only were they dealing with the trauma of abuse and absence from friends and familiar surroundings, but they were further isolated by being unable to go to school or nursery. To help these children, Look Ahead secured funds from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Ministry of Justice to fund items and activities, including board games, a playhouse, garden/sports equipment, laptops and iPads, to support home schooling and wellbeing.

Our mental health services

Our mental health services continue to thrive, with demand increasing due to the pandemic. This year the Board approved our strategy for growth, which sees Look Ahead as a reliable and innovative partner within Integrated Care Systems and moving into new areas to provide services.

Supporting hospital discharge

This year, we continued to deliver a series of pilots across the North Central London Integrated Care System, in partnership with Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust (C&I), Barnet, Enfield and Haringey NHS Trust (BEH) and the North Central London CCG (NCL CCG). We supported them to improve patient flow out of mental health inpatient wards and to reduce preventable readmission through proactive community support interventions.

Patients who are well enough to be discharged but have issues that prevent them, such as lack of suitable housing or social care packages, are referred to the services. C&I has seen great results, including:

- **A reduction in readmissions to NHS wards – down from 10% to 3%**
- **Hospital stays shortened, so for example, at C&I the average length of stay was 50 days before the pilot and is now 42.**

Our learning disability and autism services

Our strategy is to ensure that more people can benefit from the support we offer in our learning disabilities and autism services. We have supported a number of new customers this year to transition from institutional-type care into their own homes. For some this is the first time they have lived in their community of choice for many years.

To support this, we have introduced a new referral section on the Look Ahead website, which allows commissioners to view the placements we have available at any point in time.

We have continued to invest in new properties and to develop existing properties to meet needs. This includes the purchase of Pelham Road, Gravesend, Kent, which we plan to convert into five high quality apartments. We will support one customer in each flat, providing high level, one-to-one support. We have also renovated three properties in the London Borough of Newham, which we have made available as single person accommodation with high support needs.

Learning disability subsidiaries

We were excited to complete the acquisition of Kingswood Care Services Limited in September 2020. Kingswood Care Services operates five care homes for people with learning disabilities and/or autism in Essex and employs more than 100 staff. They have achieved CQC ratings of good and outstanding, and offer tremendous outcomes for the people they support.

In line with our development strategy, Kingswood Care Services is planning to open a supported living service for four people by the end 2021.

Last year we reported the acquisition of Blythson Limited trading as Proactive Development in Kent. They opened a new supported living service in Folkestone in 2021 for four people receiving 24 hour support.

Supporting young people in our services

As a result of the pandemic, our support for the young people we work with was needed more than ever this year as they struggled to cope with disruptions to work, training, education and the impact of the pandemic on their mental health.

Semi-independent living in Lambeth

As a result of the pandemic, the London Borough of Lambeth wanted to secure accommodation for young people in shared living environments to enable them to temporarily self isolate. Look Ahead was able to provide a block booking in one of our semi-independent services, Horn Lane, which made six units of accommodation accessible to any Lambeth young person. This arrangement has now been extended to provide emergency accommodation for the London Borough of Lambeth, giving peace of mind if there is a need to move a young person in an emergency, for example, as a result of child exploitation or gang involvement.



Commercial Road service



Commissioned by Tower Hamlets Council and delivered in partnership with the East London NHS Foundation Trust, Commercial Road is a mixed-gender service for 21 individuals with complex mental health needs. The service consists of 11 self-contained flats for individuals requiring high support and 10 'step-down' self-contained flats.

Customers come to the service with a range of issues, including substance misuse, personality disorder, forensic histories, severe and enduring mental health issues, as well as backgrounds of domestic abuse and homelessness. The plan is for every customer to stay less than five years.

The service was judged 'Outstanding' by our internal auditing team.



Contract manager, Catriona D'Arcy, outlines what makes it special for her.

"Like all services at Look Ahead it is about the people and the culture we promote within the service. I'm sure what I will say will be true for the majority of services.

"All staff and customers come to the service with a fresh start, regardless of their background, and I feel as though we have an informal 'code of conduct' in the service for both staff and customers.

"We try to create a culture of openness and learning. After any incidents we explore the learning instead of focusing on mistakes or casting any blame.

"We focus a great deal on team development. We have a weekly reflective practice session and I encourage my whole team to try new things that they believe will benefit customers and their own personal development. Safety and morale are the areas that we devote most time and attention to.

"We have a great activity programme, including cooking, keep fit and now that we are out of lockdown a range of outings and activities. Three customers are now in employment, with two more starting to look at work-like activities.

"We try to recruit diverse and ambitious members of staff, who are selected for their strong personalities, and for their passion for what we do. We're proud that many of our staff move on within Look Ahead to more senior roles in other services.

"Finally, we laugh together, as when things are difficult you need to be able to share and laugh together, focus on the positives whilst learning from setbacks. Humour is a key element for bonding customers and staff; it definitely helps to create the culture we have at Commercial Road."



“Humour is a key element for bonding customers and staff; it definitely helps to create the culture we have at our service.”

our customers

5982 customers supported

1126 customers achieving greater independence

5 experts by experience courses offered

77 people trained by experts by experience

63 peer support volunteers

21 people involved in Tenant and Landlord Panel

92% of customers satisfied/very satisfied that staff listened, respected and encouraged them



“During the recruitment process I asked the candidate what they would do to support us. It was good having my question there. It was nice to be involved in this and I really enjoyed it.”

Martin, a customer from Amy Garvey House Learning Disability Service



Look Ahead's customers are at the heart of everything we do. This year has been a challenging one for our customers, and their resilience during difficult times has been inspiring. From board level recruitment to training staff in services, volunteering on committees and providing peer-to-peer support, customers are integral to Look Ahead's success.

Customer involvement at all levels of the organisation

A significant ethos that Look Ahead holds is the importance of customer involvement at every level of the organisation. We aim to have customers involved in at least 80% of all recruitment across Look Ahead, all the way from a new support worker up to senior management.

We believe customers bring a unique and valuable perspective to recruitment. Customers might show prospective staff around a service, organise activities, or sit on an interview panel – and much more.

We provide customers with training and support, such as a question bank to help them quiz candidates. This year we recruited a new board chair, Baroness Watkins of Tavistock, who joins us in July 2021, and our customers were able to provide input, even at this most senior level of the organisation.

Experts By Experience training

Our Experts by Experience (EBE) training programme continues to give customers and those with lived experience a chance to train staff on topics including mental health, substance misuse, LGBTQ+, domestic abuse, Asperger's and more.

Due to the pandemic, EBE training was put on hold as services were focused on frontline work. However, in the first few months of 2021, we delivered EBE courses to 77 people. This year we developed a brand new course giving an insight into the lives of those with experiences of hearing voices. In addition, we added seven new trainers for courses on substance misuse, personality disorder, mental health, LGBTQ+, and domestic abuse.

Tenant/Landlord relationship

We continued our work with the Tenant and Landlord Panel (TALP), which involved 21 customers across three meetings during the year. These sessions allow customers to ask questions and have a say in the way Look Ahead works.

Based on customer feedback and our customer strategy, we developed an online **Tenant Handbook**, with sections covering a range of topics, including maintenance, safety, paying rent online, rights and responsibilities, how to get involved, our performance and more.

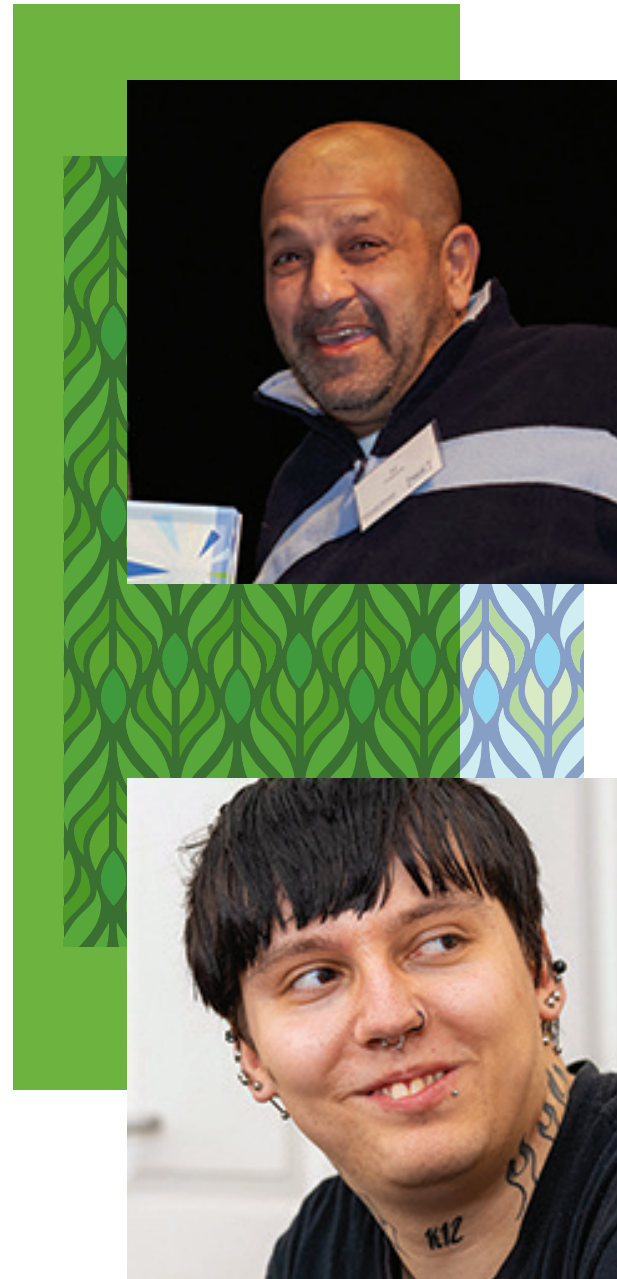
To ensure that all the information is easy to access, Look Ahead has launched new accessibility tools for our website, including **Browsealoud** to assist users of the tenancy handbook, or those making general enquiries.

Customer survey

We value the input of our customers and this year we surveyed nearly 1000 of them to hear what they had to say. We learned that

- **88% of customers surveyed felt very satisfied or fairly satisfied by the choice and control they received from their support**
- **80% of customers surveyed felt very satisfied or fairly satisfied that they had opportunities to get involved at the service**
- **89% of customers surveyed felt very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the communication from Look Ahead during the pandemic**
- **90% of customers surveyed felt very satisfied or satisfied that Look Ahead treated them fairly regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, disability or religion**

We are always looking for ways to improve and we will be sharing the results of the survey with customers in a special Annual Report edition of the customer newsletter, **Heads Up**.



“It gives you a voice, and although it’s not a forum to raise your specific issues, it allows you to understand those issues and look at all of the layers behind it.

Because of mine and other TALP members’ feedback, rent statements were updated to be easier to understand. I shared my thoughts and ideas at TALP and they listened and they got it. We made a change.”

Raf, a customer from a homelessness hotel who has been engaged with TALP



Nural's story

Nural, 39, lives at one of our East London Learning Disabilities services. Before coming to our service in 2018 she had been in and out of hospital for 18 years.

Nural has a range of complex needs, including learning disabilities, autism, schizoaffective disorder, emotionality unstable personality disorder and challenging behaviour. She is also diabetic, with weight and mobility problems.

When Nural arrived, staff implemented a two-month transition to help her adjust. For the first few months of her placement she seemed to want to return to hospital as this was all she really knew.

Through a range of techniques, her support team has helped her to adjust. Working with a range of external partners, including the community mental health team, occupational therapy and dietician, Nural has lost weight and is managing her diabetes. She has regular contact with her family, including monthly visits to relatives, and has recently been on holiday.

She has a walking frame with a seat, which allows her to rest, which has encouraged her to go out more; she also enjoys regular outings in the community.

Most recently she has been involved with redecorating her home. All of her quality of life indicators have improved in the service, which is her longest placement outside of a hospital.



our people

1352	group staff
333	flexible support workers
86	studying for an ILM programme
23	fully qualified and 7 part qualified from an ILM programme
171	training courses offered
453	people attended induction sessions
50	internal promotions
75%	staff engagement



Look Ahead's passionate and talented staff are our greatest asset and no more so than during the past year.

We have made good progress this year towards our strategic goal around people. This involves developing an agile, safe, diverse workforce and ensuring that we harness talent from within.

Pandemic management

Our staff went to extraordinary lengths to continue to provide our services during the pandemic. We have closely managed the pandemic through our internal working group (called the 'Silver Group'), made up of senior staff who provided advice and guidance to Contract Managers on the changes to Covid-19 rules/regulations, and around general management of Covid-19 cases in services.

Services found innovative ways to keep customers engaged throughout the later waves of the pandemic, which was challenging for everyone, particularly in the winter months.

Staff wellbeing

The last two years have been the most challenging that our sector has ever faced, and we believe our staff are true social care heroes. To support staff, we've been focusing more on their mental health and wellbeing over the last year. This has included access to more counselling and support, as well as fun wellbeing activities. For example, our Wellbeing Week in January offered 21 activities and was well attended by staff and customers.

Diversity and inclusion

Our focus on Diversity and Inclusion has continued this year and we've produced our third inclusion and diversity report detailing our commitment to this area. Our staff networks covering race, gender, sexuality and disabilities have continued to influence our work in these areas, and in a recent survey 83% of staff felt that they are treated fairly at work regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion or disability.

The importance of the Black Lives Matter Campaign during this year cannot be underestimated. To support

our staff it was important that we gave them the opportunity to talk and for us to learn and understand. Our Chief Executive, Chris Hampson, spoke to staff to get views and feedback about what more we can do. Staff posted blogs on their feelings and their concerns, we held inclusion forums to get feedback from those who wanted to represent their views, and the LGBTQ+ network dedicated Pride month to Black Lives Matter.

Making progress in reducing our pay gaps

We are pleased that our gender pay gap remains incredibly low from 2.2% in 2018 to 0.8% in 2020, with the mean average pay increasing very slightly to 3.3%. The housing sector national average gender pay gap is 8.1% and therefore we benchmark very positively against this. Our Diversity and Inclusion Report outlines more information on this as well as our CEO Multiplier score and our cultural diversity pay gap.

“I think Look Ahead is a naturally diverse environment, and I've not worked in a place like that before.”

Jaz Owen, Trauma Informed Care Specialist Support Worker and Lead for the LGBT+ Network



Award-winning people

We were delighted to be awarded Bronze in the Inclusive Employers Standard for the second year running after working closely with our partners, Inclusive Employers.

Our annual Women in Leadership Award was this year awarded to Hannah Lawless, Contract Manager, and our Rising Star Award was given to two members of staff: Jaz Owen, Trauma Informed Care Specialist Support Worker, and Giuseppe Di Martino, Area Service Manager.

Our staff often go beyond the call of duty and we continue to recognise excellence at our quarterly staff awards in line with our organisational values of trust, partnership, excellence and aspiration.

Moving Forward with our change programme

Move Forward, our internal change programme, is in its fourth year. The programme is focused on ensuring the organisation is fit for the future and that staff are equipped with the tools and skills they need to do the best job they can, as efficiently as they can, so that they have more time to spend with customers.

Behind the scenes, we've been putting in place the infrastructure to support a more streamlined way of working with the new Digital Workplace, which includes the roll out of Office 365 and will be rolled out by November 2021. To support this we've recruited and trained 35 Digital Champions from across the business who will act as design approvers, training support and communication leads.

Over the past year, despite the pandemic, we've made good progress, introducing a number of systems to enable us to move forward.

This includes an **'On-track'** system to record domestic violence (DV) into our DV services and Go-Audits, an online auditing platform, which supports quality audits across the organisation. We've also introduced back office HR systems to ensure less time is spent on recording holidays, rota and admin-based service functions.

Log my Care, an online support tool, will be rolled out to our Learning Disability services in Summer 2021.



championing internal progression



Look Ahead is committed to promoting talent from within and this year there were 50 internal promotions. Ikenna (Ike) Anyanwu is one of those who has seen his career take off with Look Ahead

Ike started as a Support Worker in 2014 at the Harrow Mental Health service. Over the past seven years he has moved up from Team Leader to Contract Manager to Project Manager for a Housing First Project, which is a trailblazer for Look Ahead. This year Ike has been promoted to Service Transformation Manager, supporting the implementation of new services.

Ike says: "When I started out working in the support sector I was keen to progress, and I'm pleased that since I came to Look Ahead they have given me the opportunity to do this beyond my wildest imagination.

"Our organisation has invested in my leadership skills with training courses, including Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) courses levels two and three, and I'm currently studying level five Operational Management and Leadership. These courses have been a game changer for my progression within the organisation.

"I'm really enjoying my new role and have been working to implement the new Heaney Hub – single homelessness contract in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC). It is a great service, supporting people who are socially excluded with complex needs. This new service means that Look Ahead now manages five different clusters of services across the north of the borough, and it has really strengthened our partnership with RBKC.

"I would encourage anyone who is keen to find career progression in this sector to consider Look Ahead, as there is opportunity to progress not just upwards, but across different specialisms, which means you can experience different challenges without moving organisation.

"I love my job and I get so much satisfaction knowing that I work hard, but what I do really can make a difference. I've got tremendous support from senior leadership to ensure my career progression remains a constant work in progress, so I can achieve my ambition of a higher leadership role within the organisation."

our homes

1306 properties owned

1221 properties managed on behalf of other landlords where Look Ahead provide the Care and Support.

3160 properties in total where Look Ahead provides Services (remaining properties managed by other landlords)

100% of Look Ahead properties had a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) at year end 2020/21

100% of Look Ahead properties fully gas compliant at year end 2020/21

£4.4_m Investment in major repairs and component replacement





Look Ahead is a Housing Association regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (ROSH), and a care and support provider with oversight from our local authority and health partners. Twenty of our services are also regulated by the Care Quality Commission.

Good quality accommodation is a key part of our offer and vital to ensuring we enable our customers to reach greater levels of independence in their lives.

Many of our services are delivered in Look Ahead owned properties. We are committed to the ongoing maintenance of our existing properties, as well as investing in them to ensure they are fit for purpose for customers and commissioning partners.

Investment in accommodation

Look Ahead recognises that there is a significant demand for the new supply of accommodation across all of our customer groups. Consequently, we are focused on the redevelopment and refurbishment of our existing properties to meet changing customer needs and/or taking on new properties through purchase, lease, or new build development. We currently have eight property refurbishments in the pipeline for 2021/22.

Asset management and investment

To ensure we deliver our strategic objectives around our property, Look Ahead has an Asset Management Strategy, which sets out processes and rules for investing in our stock and meeting the needs of current and future tenants/customers.



Approach to compliance

Look Ahead is focused on ensuring that we meet all current and emerging building regulations, and that we are fully compliant with the latest fire safety regulations and environmental requirements set out under the **Zero Carbon** agenda.

Look Ahead has a central Landlord Compliance department that is fully focused on ensuring that we meet legislation across the key compliance areas of:

- Fire Safety
- Gas Safety
- Water Safety
- Electrical Safety
- Lift Safety
- Asbestos

Our compliance works continued throughout the lockdown, but were conducted in a Covid-19 secure way, as we deemed this work essential for the safety of our customers.



In addition to complying with legislation, we are striving to work with our customers and staff to maintain the highest levels of safety. This includes developing better ways of working and looking at preventative strategies that go beyond the legislation and are geared to the different complex needs of our customers. We are also looking at ways to future proof our buildings in terms of safety features. Where Look Ahead is not the landlord, we take a challenging approach to ensuring the buildings are safe for our customers and staff, and raise issues where attention is needed.

Investing in technology

We recognise that investment in our IT infrastructure and software is vital to improving our housing offer to customers. Our **CX Housing Management System**, introduced in 2017, is being developed in preparation for our new maintenance contracts with suppliers, which are planned to go live in October 2021.

The improvements to our system will enable better integration between Look Ahead and contractors' systems using **Application Programme Interface** (API) technology. This will enable better planning and communication regarding customer appointments, alongside a range of other improvements.

We are also currently in the process of implementing **'True Compliance'**. This new system will allow us to improve tracking of ongoing works as well as communications across Look Ahead and with our customers.

Dene's* story

"I moved into St Margaret's House in June 2020 following a family breakdown.

"I would often clash with my parents over my identity. I identify as LGBTQ+, and my parents struggled to understand or accept who I was. This created a lot of conflict, and that invalidation from them led to me struggling with my own mental health.

"There were a few occasions where I had to be hospitalised because of self-harm. This was also difficult for my parents to cope with and I felt I needed some of my own space to grow and become my own person.

"I registered as homeless, and the crisis support team helped me find Look Ahead. The staff at the service were immediately welcoming and friendly. I had never lived

by myself and there was a lot for me to take in. Whilst I had developed life skills like cooking and cleaning on my own when living at home, I had never considered things like paying bills or getting universal credit. The staff here talked me through everything clearly, so I never felt overwhelmed.

"The staff never made me feel like I was ever 'too much'. I have quite a lot of mental health diagnoses from my experiences growing up and I had often been made to feel like a burden or a 'freak' in the past. This has never been the case at Look Ahead. They help me with my emotional support, and they always notice when I'm not doing well. They know what my coping mechanisms are and take the time to talk to me when I need it. I really appreciate being treated like an individual.

"The staff accept me for who I am and have always fought for me. A year ago, I was banned from college, but the staff did everything they could to explain my circumstances and help me back in. Now, I have completed my Level 3 BTEC in performance arts and will now be studying this at university later this year.

"I'm pleased to say that my relationship with my family has improved too. They have visited me at the service and have been happy to see my progress.

"I am so thankful for the support Look Ahead have given me. Their efforts have empowered me to build my independence and follow my passion."

*Name changed to protect identity.



our partnerships



At Look Ahead we know that building strong partnerships with local authorities, NHS trusts, businesses and other organisations is key to our success. As an organisation with a social purpose, we work with funders who align with our values and want to give something back to the people and communities in which we operate.

Working with the property sector

LandAid, a grant-giving property industry charity that works to improve the lives of young people experiencing homelessness in the UK, has offered significant support to our young people's services. LandAid's mission is to end youth homelessness and several of our services have benefitted from their funding and expertise.

Last year, LandAid secured funding of £120,000 through **SEGRO**, a property investment and development company. This funding has gone towards the refurbishment of St Kilda's, our young people service in Ealing.

Through our partnership with LandAid, Look Ahead was one of the nine organisations featured in the **2020 Story of Christmas Appeal**. The Story of Christmas is an annual Christmas charity event, which is supported by the property and construction industries. The virtual event in December 2020, featuring celebrities including Ian Hislop and Dame Judi Dench, raised more than £417,000. We were delighted to receive £45,000 of this to renovate and extend St Kilda's.

LandAid has also secured a second partner, **Property Race Day**, to help us refurbish a second young people's service in Ealing through a significant donation, and is working with us to help secure employment support for young people.

Developing creative partnerships

Many of our services use creative therapies to enhance their customer offer. From dance workshops at our Amy Garvey learning disability service, to arts masterclasses at our Felstead Street mental health service, we are always looking for local partnerships to benefit our customers.

This year we were delighted to have been selected as one of two community partners to take part in **OrchLab**, a creative music programme funded by the London Philharmonic Orchestra with Drake Music, leaders in music, disability and technology.

The partnership aims to share the music of the orchestra with disabled adults through a combination of workshops using accessible instruments, online activities, training and events.

The programme is run at Look Ahead's Flying Angel Newham-based service, which is home to customers with learning disabilities and mental health needs.

Through a series of workshops and virtual events, the programme aims to enhance the wellbeing of participants, and equip customers and staff with the confidence to take their next musical steps beyond OrchLab.

Talia Lash, Education and Community Manager at the London Philharmonic Orchestra, said: "We are really excited to be working with Look Ahead on our OrchLab programme. As an orchestra we know how powerful music can be as a tool for self expression, connection and wellbeing."

Rob Van Wissen, Contract Manager at Flying Angel, said: "Customers have really enjoyed the experience of working with the orchestra, which has been particularly valuable this year when many other services have been shut due to the pandemic."



fundraising and partnerships



Chelsea and England footballer, Reece James, helping deliver food to our homelessness accommodation in Westminster on Christmas Eve

Improving lives through donations

This year we were acutely aware that many of the community facilities our customers rely on were closed due to the pandemic, so we have done all we can to fill the gap.

In November 2020 we launched the Secret Santa campaign to raise funds and spread festive cheer to the people we support. We were delighted to receive more than £11,000 at the end of the campaign. Every pound received was used for food, gifts and festivities for individuals, families and children across our services.

A total of 167 children received gifts from Look Ahead and 108 families staying at a Look Ahead service received vouchers.

We also provided a range of support for services to hold events in celebration of Eid.

We are thankful for the generous donations we received from individuals, partners and corporates throughout this year.

Influencing the sector

Look Ahead plays an active role in a range of umbrella organisations across our specialisms, including the National Care Forum, Learning Disability England, the National Housing Federation and Homeless Link. Chris Hampson, our CEO, is an active member of the Board of the NHS Confederation Mental Health Network. We also regularly contribute to government consultations and research.

Demonstrating value for money

In February 2021, we launched our new report into the financial case for integrated mental health and supported housing pathways. Authored by Europe Economics, the report found that nearly £1 billion could be saved by the NHS and social care if the integrated models of care that Look Ahead run in mental health and housing were adopted at scale. The virtual report launch was attended by more than 150 people and featured senior panellists, including Health and Social Care Committee member, Paul Bristow MP, and Baroness Claire Tyler, Liberal Democrat spokesperson for mental health.

our governance and board

Senior Leadership Team

Chris Hampson,
Chief Executive

Julie Blair,
Executive Director of
Corporate Services

Alex Seery,
Managing Director of Care
and Support

Guy Robinson,
Executive Director of Housing
and Asset Management

Rosa Napolitano
Executive Director of Business
Development and Innovation

Samantha Stewart
Executive Director of Finance

Board of Management

Julie Jones
Look Ahead Chair
(retired 21 July 2021)
Trustee Sir Simon Milton
Foundation
Associate ADASS

**Baroness Mary Watkins
of Tavistock**
Look Ahead Chair
(from 21 July 2021)
Member of the House of Lords
Chair, Mental Health Nursing
Review, Higher Education
England NHS
Member of Quality Committee
– Outcomes First Group
President – Florence
Nightingale Foundation
Deputy Chair – War Widows
Association
Patron – Datum Foundation

Graham Buckland
(retired July 2021)
Chair of Investment and
Treasury Committee
Independent Chair of
'Granary Trust'
Non-Executive Director
Allied Irish Bank

Kevin Chiweta Obi
Chairman/Founder of a
Charity – NIDSG
Director of Synergy Inc Limited

Tom Dacey
Chair of Blythson Limited
– Look Ahead subsidiary
Chair of Kingswood Care
Services Limited – Look Ahead
subsidiary
Chair of MP Living

Chris Dobson
(retired September 2020)
Partner, EY LLP

Sean Duggan
(retired September 2020)
Chief Executive of the Mental
Health Network for the NHS
Confederation.

Ellie Edwards-Scott
Chair of Look Ahead Tenant
and Landlord Panel

Stephen Firn
Non-Executive Director
/Deputy Chair
Surrey and Borders Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust
Independent Non-Executive
Director, Cygnet Health Care

Kevin Gould
Chair of Audit and Risk
Committee
Non-Executive Director of
Queen Victoria Hospital NHS
Foundation Trust, and Chair
of Audit Committee and a
member of their Finance and
Performance Committee
Independent Non-Executive
Director of Grand Union
Housing Group, and a member
of Audit and Risk Committee
Independent member of
the Board of Governors of
Staffordshire University,
and Chair of Audit and Risk
Committee

Jane Hives
(retired September 2020)
Voluntary Treasurer,
The Pixel Fund

Richard Jones
Chair Shared Lives Plus
Chair Syncora (Part of the
Calico Group)
Trustee Action on Hearing Loss
Special Advisor LSE
– Supporting Adult Social Care
Innovation
NHS Leadership Academy
– Cohort Director

Sharon Slotnick
Chair of Remuneration
Committee
Board member of Look Ahead
subsidiaries, Kingswood Care
Services Ltd and Blythson
Limited
Case Manager, Ministry of
Justice
Visitor, Office of the Public
Guardian

closing remarks from our chair

I hope you have enjoyed reading our annual review this year. We have faced an unusual combination of opportunities and challenges and for some it has been a very sad year.

Look Ahead has been able to grow and develop services, whilst ensuring that the risks posed to our customers and staff from the Covid-19 pandemic have been well managed. I am extremely grateful to all of our staff for the resilience and commitment they have shown in such difficult circumstances.

We have a long, proud history, and during my nine years on the Board we have taken on new challenges and expanded across London and the South East. Working with four customer groups and with 39 different local authorities, NHS trusts and

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's), we were able to innovate and manage our risks. Our finances are strong and we have invested in new businesses to strengthen our long term position and build new partnerships.

This is my last year as Chair of Look Ahead's Board. It has been a pleasure and a privilege. I would like to thank my fellow board members, our CEO and his senior teams for their excellent leadership during this pandemic year. Our frontline staff and those working in back office support roles have given outstanding service to Look Ahead and our customers.

JULIE JONES CBE
Chair

“I wish my successor and all my colleagues at Look Ahead a very happy and successful future.”



thank you

Thank you to our donors and partners for their support this year:

Accumulate
ACIES Group
Adventure in Architecture
Assent Building Control Ltd
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BDS Healthcare and
Technology
Better Bankside
Champman bdsp
Chatter
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Croydon Mosque
Cruush
Deliveroo
Devonshires
Doughty Street Foodbank
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Evening Standard
Homelessness Fund

Fareshare
Felix Project
Fourth Wave
Gilmartins
Greater London Authority
Herrco Cosmetics
Inclusive employers
JAGS Foundation
LandAid
Langar Aid House
Leonard Cheshire
London Philharmonic Orchestra
London Homelessness
Collective
Lush
Maidenhead Aquatics
Mayor of London's Rough
Sleeping Campaign
MedSupplyDrive
Ministry of Housing,
Communities and Local
Government (MHCLG)
Ministry of Justice (MoJ)
MNM
Morgan Sindall Construction
Muslim Youth Organisation
Nandos
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Vigilant
Westminster Hidden Network
Yum Yum
Zurich Insurance
Zurich Municipal

In line with our core values – **excellence, aspiration, partnership** and **trust** – we align ourselves with other organisations that help us to achieve our vision.

accreditations

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Silver



awards



memberships and associations



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