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# Heads-up

Look Ahead's new customer newsletter

## Look Ahead's new website

**We are very excited to be starting 2017 with the launch of our new Look Ahead website!**

Customers from all across Look Ahead worked with us to create the new site and let us know what they wanted and needed from our new site.

One of the most important parts of creating this new website was making sure that we were building something that would be useful for you, our customers.

We asked customers to get involved and give us their opinions. As a result the new site has lots of interesting content and features specifically aimed at customers and grouped together in our **'For our customers'** section.

Here you can find:

- A new **'Your Look Ahead journey'** section that provides information about what you can expect during every stage of your time with us.



- An easy to use **'Request a repair'** form which lets you report any problems with your accommodation. (This is where Look Ahead provide your repairs and maintenance service).
- A new **'feedback form'** you can use to report complaints, pay us a compliment or nominate a Look Ahead staff member for an award.

To make sure this information is accessible for our customers we have also created **'easy-read versions'** of each of these new pages.

Thank you to everyone who was involved with this. Please visit our new website at [www.lookahead.org.uk](http://www.lookahead.org.uk)

We'd love to know what you think of the new site so please let us know your feedback by emailing us at, [communications@lookahead.org.uk](mailto:communications@lookahead.org.uk)



## Welcoming our new young customers in Milton Keynes

To kick off 2017, we are pleased to be opening our first service in Milton Keynes, in Buckinghamshire. This new service will support 67 young people, living across a number of different properties.

Staff at the service will offer support to young people from a variety of backgrounds. We will be supporting people to look after their homes, manage their money, get into college, training or work and more.

So a big hello and welcome to all our new customers - we look forward to getting to know you over the next few months.

## Sending festive wishes

Every year, we send Christmas cards to the organisations and people that we work with, thanking them for their support over the last year. You may have seen these in your local service. This year, the cards were even more special than usual as they were designed by one of our customers.

The card's design was based on an image drawn by a person who lives in one of our services in Kensington and Chelsea. The card was then produced and printed by a local company the service is working with. A big thanks to both for helping us create a truly unique Christmas Card for 2016.



## Hopkinson House Christmas stall

The week before Christmas, customers from our Hopkinson House service in Westminster ran a stall at the Berwick Street market in Soho. The stall offered our customers the opportunity to sell t-shirts, mugs and tote bags they had designed and produced themselves.



Hopkinson House service recently won an innovation fund and customers decided to use some of the money from the fund to design and make products which they could then sell. They worked with social enterprise People Empowering People to get their designs printed onto the items. People Empowering People aims to empower people to engage with their communities.



Once they had made their products, customers at Hopkinson House worked with staff to secure a free stall for two days in Berwick Street. Several of the customers who were involved in making the bags, mugs and t-shirts also helped to man the stall. They had lots of visitors over their two days on the market and managed to sell over £400 worth of products. The stall was so successful that they have been asked to come back and do it again!

**All the money they raised on the stall is being used to fund more exciting projects in the service. This will include painting, decorating and greenhouse projects. Well done to all the customers at Hopkinson House!**

## CUSTOMER POETRY COMPETITION

Over the last few weeks we have been running a customer poetry competition. We know many of our customers are creative and enjoy writing to express themselves.

We received entries from all across our services. Chris Hampson, our Chief Executive read and enjoyed them all, and here is the winner.

## The Mentally Challenged Caterpillar

Going through life without an aim,  
Days merging to seem all the same,  
Always being moved from place to place,  
I'm losing my identity; I'm sinking without a trace,  
The years pass by without a care,  
I've opened up so much I'm standing bare,  
Now in my cocoon, an 8 x 6 cell,  
This is rock bottom, this is my hell,  
But not a butterfly I did become,  
Back as a caterpillar, what the \*\*\*\* had I done?

To & fro to my cocoon I did go,  
Till eventually this time my wings did grow,  
Now I'm with a flock of butterflies like me,  
And an apprenticeship chef is what I want to be,  
So I'm gonna spread my wings and learn to fly,  
Way above the clouds, all the way up high.

Anonymous, West London



## Look Ahead people: **Meet Anwar**

**Heads-up is created by and for Look Ahead customers, and every issue we use this section to get to know more about a particular customer. This issue we meet Anwar, a customer at one of our Tower Hamlets services and find out more about how our support has helped him to achieve his goals.**

Anwar has been attending our Tower Hamlets Anthill Road Day Centre for a number of years. He has learning disabilities and limited speech, so he communicates with staff using signing.

During his time with the service, staff have got to know him well and discovered his passion for cars, motorbikes and bicycles. With the help of staff, Anwar joined an inclusive cycling club in Victoria Park and set himself the goal of learning to ride a bike.

Staff worked with Anwar to make sure that he understood the importance of wearing a helmet and being aware of others on the road. Thanks to his hard work Anwar can now ride a bicycle on his own.

In early December, Anwar received an award for his achievement as part of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. He was given the award for helping to break down stereotypes about what people with learning disabilities can achieve.

Anwar's success is helping to inspire his fellow customers. He continues to learn new skills such as cooking, music and arts and crafts. He is also supporting other customers to learn to sign in the service's Makaton workshops.

**Congratulations Anwar – we are all very proud of what you have achieved.**

## How should Look Ahead develop?

**As an organisation, we believe in the importance of working with our customers to make our services as good as they can be.**

As part of this, we have recently been looking at how we can support more customers to get involved in this important work. You can now get involved in two new ways:

- 1. Join the Customer Committee**  
The Customer Committee oversees one or two key projects a year. These projects are things like developing our plan for how we work with customers or our wellbeing strategy. The committee meets twice a year to ensure these projects are delivered. The committee will also present the results of the work to the Board to ensure their findings are formally adopted and put into practice across the organisation.

- 2. Join a Project Team**  
We are looking for customers to join Project Teams to deliver the Customer Committee's key

projects. This work can involve anything from attending a workshop, carrying out a survey, designing a poster or organising an event. These groups are a more flexible way to be involved and you can choose how much or little time you spend on this.

### **Reward and recognition**

To thank our customers for volunteering their time on the committee, we are also looking at a range of ways we can reward your involvement. We'll be providing an update on this soon.

For more information please contact **Claire Luxton**, our Director of Quality, Performance and Governance by emailing [claireluxton@lookahead.org.uk](mailto:claireluxton@lookahead.org.uk)

**Thanks for working with us to make Look Ahead better.**



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Services we would be proud for our loved ones to receive

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