Look Ahead

CARE SUPPORT AND HOUSING

wanstor

Look Ahead is transformed into a modern workplace through IT transformation project

The Result

"At every step of the way, Wanstor have offered us the best solution for the best value. They're always focused on how we can save money, improve our service, and update our approach to IT.

"Wanstor encouraged revisiting our original model to find a more cost-effective approach, which has worked amazingly well.

"We definitely made the right choice, as the project has given us instant agility. Everyone is delighted.

"We have a great relationship with our account manager and the team.

"We know that Wanstor know our business model inside out, and we don't stand alone. They're an extension of Look Ahead, a perception that helps me to deliver on strategy because the business sees an IT team they can put their trust in.

"Look Ahead have gained reliability, agility, flexibility and increased security in equal measure.

"As the transformation beds in, we'll introduce automation and a self-service model for things like password resets to enable even greater productivity."

Key Outcomes

- ⊕ Moved on-premises exchange services into M365

- ⊕ Consolidated servers and moved into Wanstor's private cloud

- ⊕ Retired legacy hardware delivering cost savings

- ⊕ Microsoft 365 deployed on an affordable, not-for-profit license

- ⊕ Always on, reliable technology with 24-hour service desk

- ⊕ A modern estate which will be Cyber Security Plus certified

Background

Look Ahead Care is a leading provider of specialist care, support and housing services across London and the South East.

It supports over 7,000 people with a wide range of needs across mental health, homelessness, learning disabilities and other complex needs.

They have 1,100 permanent employees, 250 bank staff and 150 offices, all requiring a robust IT support infrastructure and services.

The charitable housing association works at building better lives for those it supports through social care and housing in local communities.

It co-designs and delivers services that offer innovative social care solutions and support people to thrive.

The Challenge

Look Ahead were operating a legacy IT model with costly servers and applications and unreliable, disparate systems on an aging infrastructure.

Whilst staff were mobile through their portal, it was inefficient, unreliable and not scalable, leaving them unable to benefit from complex and archaic IT architecture.

Their IT Director wanted to embark on a digital transformation project to make technology an ally and a business enabler, futureproofing the organisation and allowing staff to work from anywhere.

"My vision for information management and technology was to provide secure, agile access to better data at the point of service delivery. Enabling Look Ahead to grow services and transform the lives of more vulnerable people meant it was essential that our IT was a strategic priority, meeting the expectations of staff and customers.

"Simplifying that technology was a necessity. We needed to be confident in our IT, knowing that it is always on, robust, flexible and, in the event of a crisis, can be promptly and effectively recovered."

The Solution

A strategy was scoped for redeveloping and consolidating Look Ahead's IT architecture, moving into the cloud and deploying M365.

The IT Director's original intention was to build on their Citrix stack, but this changed when Wanstor found challenges attached to the project.

"We would have required a huge investment. I trusted Wanstor's recommendation to move into their data centre and Azure instead."

Wanstor recommended moving away from Citrix and on-premise file management into SharePoint, embracing Microsoft 365 to take advantage of license savings available to registered charities.

Solutions delivered 'as a service', such as the Microsoft stack, enable organisations to revolutionise their IT with enterprise grade solutions whilst spending very little.

In addition to removing existing gaps in the organisation's security to introduce solutions like Microsoft Defender, we ensured that Look Ahead is placed to become Cyber Essentials Plus accredited.

800 new devices have been deployed to team members, and staff will have access to new technology that works out of the box.

Wanstor are also helping the business look at front line app development to help nurture flexible working further, along with gathering helpful metrics and insights moving forward.

> "Our original path would have ended up requiring a huge investment, so I trusted Wanstor's recommendations to move into their data centres and Azure instead."
>
> **IT Director**
> Look Ahead