



Transforming social care through technology:

Wanstor and Look Ahead Care

In today's digital age, the social care sector faces immense challenges in delivering effective services and support.

A major issue is that many providers rely on outdated IT systems that often get in the way of delivering efficient and cost-effective care.

In particular, legacy infrastructure and siloed platforms make accessing information difficult for social care workers.

This impedes their ability to collaborate, work flexibly and respond rapidly to the needs of vulnerable individuals, while poor technology access can lead to information gaps that put further pressure on people and processes.

There is, however, a huge opportunity for care organisations that embrace digital transformation.

With the right technology strategy, they can eliminate inefficiencies, automate repetitive tasks and empower employees to provide improved support.

For instance, cloud platforms and mobility solutions enable access to real-time data and collaboration from anywhere.

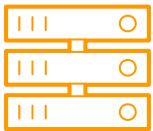
In addition, digital tools such as automated workflows and analytics provide insights that allow social workers to focus their time on what's most important - the people they support.



Look Ahead Care - Providing tailor-made support, care and accommodation

This was the situation faced by Look Ahead Care, who provide housing, care and support services for over 8,000 vulnerable people across both London and the South East. Their mission is to help clients with complex needs lead independent, fulfilling lives.

However, their ageing on-premises IT infrastructure and fragmented legacy systems were not fit for purpose in today's connected world, built on an environment that consisted of:



75 on-premises servers

Many reaching end of life



Outdated Citrix virtualisation platform

Impeding the platform's performance and security



Unreliable systems

Leading to repeated outages



No remote access to data, apps

Resulting in inefficient workflows

These technology limitations were challenging for Look Ahead Care's operations and staff productivity, with support workers using tools that were not suited for mobile and collaborative work.

The starting point: An in-depth discovery process

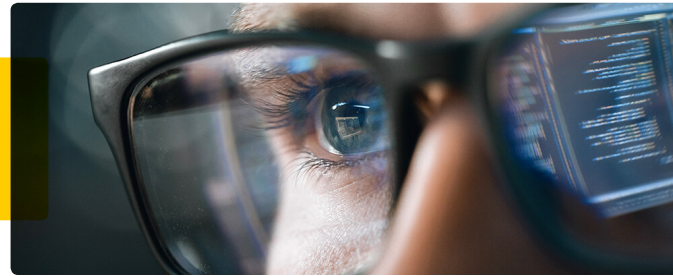
After identifying the need for change, Look Ahead Care began its digital transformation journey. Having engaged with Wanstor, the two organisations worked collaboratively to put in place a systematic process focused on understanding Look Ahead's needs, challenges and desired business outcomes.

This discovery phase involved a combination of stringent compliance efforts, comprehensive project management, daily interactions and systematic risk assessments. In addition, Wanstor initiated:



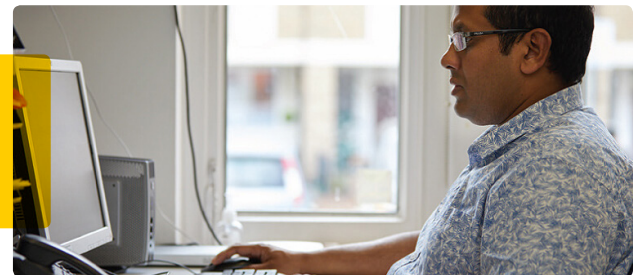
Weekly calls with stakeholders over an eight-week period to assess processes, pain points and requirements

An in-depth infrastructure assessment focusing on issues such as Citrix performance



Shadowing support workers to identify technology limitations

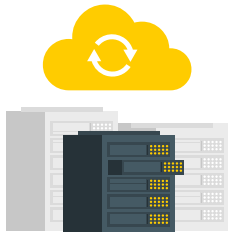
Evaluating software systems and integration challenges



These efforts provided 360° visibility into Look Ahead Care's environment. The insights gained were essential for mapping out an effective transformation strategy tailored to their unique needs.

An agile, phased approach to IT transformation

Armed with deep knowledge of Look Ahead Care's technology landscape, Wanstor formulated a phased modernisation plan built on six key pillars:



Transition to the Cloud

The ageing on-premises servers were consolidated and moved to Microsoft Azure Cloud. This enabled greater efficiency, uptime and reduced hardware costs.

Collaborative Platform Roll-Out

Microsoft 365 tools, including SharePoint, Teams and OneDrive, were deployed to connect employees. This facilitated real-time collaboration and access to information from anywhere.



Enable Mobile Work

By implementing Windows 10 and migrating away from Citrix, staff could securely access apps and data from mobile devices. This boosted productivity and flexibility.

Automate Processes

Workflows across operations and administration were digitised through the implementation of Microsoft Power Platform. This reduced the level of repetitive tasks and manual errors.



Centralise Data

Disparate data was integrated into SharePoint and Power BI dashboards. This enabled data-driven decision-making with real-time insights.

Strengthen Security

Multi-factor authentication, mobile device management and Microsoft Defender were implemented to provide enterprise-grade security

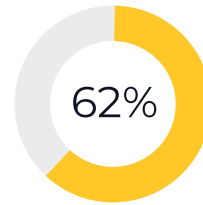


This comprehensive strategy was broken down into manageable phases focused on delivering incremental value. At the same time, Wanstor's agile approach ensured success while minimising disruption.

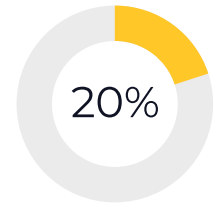
The results: Cloud-first social care

In just 18 months, Wanstor successfully transformed Look Ahead Care - away from its outdated systems to a modern digital workplace in the cloud.

The number of on-premises servers was reduced from 75 to 28, cutting infrastructure costs dramatically. In addition, a 20%+ reduction in admin workload enabled support workers to spend more time with clients.



Less servers



Less admin

With Microsoft Teams, SharePoint and OneDrive, staff could collaborate and access information from anywhere. This drove gains in productivity and response times. Real-time data sharing with external agencies also improved safeguarding.

The proof: Business impact for social good

Look Ahead Care's comprehensive IT overhaul delivered impressive business and human outcomes:

5%

increase

in time spent by support workers directly with clients

20%

reduction

in admin workload for support staff

12%

decrease

in admin handling time through digitisation

3.8%

savings

savings in admin time via self-service reporting

The business also achieved enhanced security and compliance through a reduced reliance on spreadsheets.

By using technology to remove roadblocks for employees, Wanstor empowered Look Ahead Care to improve support for its clients when they need it most.

The power of technology partnership

The digital transformation of Look Ahead Care shows the potential of technology to empower social care providers.

However, realising these benefits requires the right technology partner. Wanstor provided the strategic vision, expertise and robust execution needed to drive end-to-end change and meet Look Ahead's unique needs.

Look Ahead Care's experience provides lessons on what is required to drive successful IT-enabled change: leadership vision, user-centric design, change management and a solutions partner with a track record of viewing technology from a human perspective.

“The transformation journey that we embarked on with Wanstor made a significant impact to our organisation, our people and our customers. Moving us forward in terms of our technology has greatly improved efficiencies, both operationally and financially, enabling our most important resource, our people, to focus their time and skills on supporting those who need us.”



Geoff Balmont
IT Director, Look Ahead



SDI Trusted Partner 2023 winners for our digital transformation programme with Look Ahead Care

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