



We transform the lives of people with a disability or mental health condition by providing the best quality housing and support services to enable them to live the lives they choose, achieve their personal goals, feel valued and know their voices are heard.

NEWSLETTER June 2021

I am very pleased to share with you our [Strategic Plan update](#). It captures the positive progress we made in 2020/21 against our Strategy for 2020-23 as well as detailing the targets and plans we have for this current year 2021/22.

Last year was an extraordinary year for so many reasons and I am incredibly proud that we continued to deliver our services throughout and kept staff and customers safe while protecting the long-term viability of the organisation. Our learnings from the year are reflected in the update.



We are hopeful that we will continue to see Government restrictions lifting and that staff and customers alike will be supporting each other in returning to a new normal. As an organisation we will continue to change and adapt to make sure we are delivering the high-quality homes and services our customers deserve and campaigning on the issues that impact their lives.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue.



Julie Layton, Chief Executive

LATEST NEWS



Ian Gilders blog

We are proud members of the Learning Disability and Autism Housing Network. The network is a coalition of twelve housing associations, including Advance as a founding member, calling for action to address the barriers for new, sustainable quality housing for people with a learning disability and/or autism.

The blog by Ian Gilders, our Executive Director of Housing, focuses on the need to change policy to make supported housing more affordable to develop. [Read more](#)



Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

We were proud to take part in sharing the messages from this year's Mental Health Awareness Week. Throughout the week staff and customers shared their personal stories about the positive impact of nature on their own health and wellbeing. [Read more](#)



Care Quality Commission Strategy

A new strategy for the changing world of health and social care was published by the CQC. The new strategy is the product of 18 months of engagement and development work and sets out how CQC will change for the future.

We welcome the focus on providing independent assurance to the public of the quality of care in their area and on tackling inequalities in health and social care services. [Read more](#)

CUSTOMER FOCUS



Customer Collective

The Advance Customer Collective met on Friday 4th June. They welcomed faces familiar and new to talk about the environment and our impact on it. As well as a wellbeing check-in, a place to tell us what they think and a chance to socialise, customers were able hear from Karl Hurst (Property Services Manager) about what we are doing to reduce our carbon footprint.

Customers challenged us, asked questions, and shared their ideas for how we can be more environmentally friendly. We talked about how customers could get involved with the work. They told us that when new systems are installed in their homes, they want to be told how it works and why they are better for the environment.

The Customer Collective meets on the first Friday of every month, with activities and topics chosen by the customers. You can find out more about the Collectives and how to join the monthly meetings [here](#)



Monoj's story

Monoj came to live in an Advance managed property and receive our Support a couple of years ago. Since then our teams have worked with him to build his confidence and develop life skills increasing his independence. In 2020 he achieved his dream of getting his own home and is now able to spend his time returning to the family home to help his Mum with the cooking and cleaning. [Read more](#)



COVID-19 update

We continue to focus on ensuring that Advance communicates effectively with stakeholders about its response to the coronavirus. For the latest information please see our dedicated area on the website [here](#)



Winterbourne 10 years on

It seems hard to believe that 31st May was ten years since the broadcast of the BBC Panorama programme exposing the abuse at Winterbourne View where customers suffered abuses at the hands of staff and a system which did not treat people with respect.

At Advance, we commit in our values to work with customers in Partnership and with Respect, and that is why we supported [Learning Disability England's 5 Days of Action](#). We believe that everybody deserves a safe home.



Volunteer's week 1-7th June

We celebrated the positive impact and contribution of volunteers as part of Volunteers Week. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers past and present, who have supported our customers to live independently. Many volunteers have gone on to join our staff team and have careers at Advance. Many more stay in touch as they progress in their chosen fields. [Read more](#)

STAFF FOCUS



Staff Conference 2021

We held our annual staff conference online for the first time. It was a huge success with over 100 staff joining the interactive sessions held over three days during Mental Health Awareness Week.

Sessions focused on progress and learnings from the last year,

feedback from our staff representative group The Voice and discussions about the importance of maintaining good mental and physical health and wellbeing. On the final day we focused on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and the work we are doing to ensure Advance is an inclusive organisation for all. We also gave out our annual PRIDE staff recognition awards which was a fantastic opportunity to promote the amazing work of colleagues over the last year.

Feedback from the interactive sessions and external speaker sessions was hugely positive with a desire from colleagues to keep using online options to communicate and engage.



Stephen Lawrence Day

As part of our focus on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion we continue to discuss and promote a range of events both cultural and awareness days. Recently we were proud to share information about Stephen Lawrence Day. [Read more](#)



Gender Pay Gap Report

We were pleased to publish our Gender Pay Gap Report. In 2020, there continued to be a positive movement in reducing the gender pay gap in respect of both the mean (13.6% from 15.7%: UK average 15.5%) and the median (1.3% from 2.3%). In addition, the analysis by quartile shows an increasing representation of female employees in the higher paid segments. The findings reflect our ongoing commitment to creating a diverse workforce and ensuring parity of pay and conditions to all

employees. [Read more](#)



Celebrating Pride Month

We are really pleased to support Pride month. Annual Pride events across the world have made huge strides in securing rights and fairer representation for LGBTQ+ citizens. They continue to play an important role in providing a platform from which the community can speak out against discrimination and prejudice. [Read more](#)

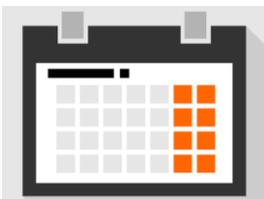
USEFUL LINKS

Useful links ▶

We are proud to be involved with or members of the following organisations and support the good work they do to improve the lives of customers with long-term disabilities and mental health conditions.

- [Voluntary Organisations Disability Group \(VODG\)](#)
- [Association of Mental Health Providers \(AMHP\)](#)
- [Charity Works](#)
- [Learning Disability England \(LDE\)](#)
- [National Housing Federation \(NHF\)](#)

DIARY DATES



We will be taking part in the following events:

- [The Autism Show](#) - online event June 2021
- [Learning Disability Week](#) – 14-20th June
- Learning Disability Today conference 1 December 2021



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marketing@advanceuk.org

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