

ISSUE 12 | SUMMER 2025

lifewayslinks

The Lifeways newsletter for the **North West** region.

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Welcome to the
**Summer Edition
of Lifeways Links!**

Interactive PDF





Hello, I'm Ros Creamer and I'm your local Lifeways Business Development and Relationship Manager for the North West.

I'm currently working with developers and housing associations around new opportunities in the region. If you would like to discuss current gaps in provision and how Lifeways can help you meet these needs, then please contact me on ros.creamer@lifeways.co.uk.

I hope you enjoy our summer issue of Lifeways Links where we take the opportunity to look at some of the exciting developments taking place across Lifeways and celebrate some of the great achievements of the people we support in your region.



How we can support

Lifeways supports adults living with learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities, acquired brain injuries or mental health needs to lead more fulfilling and independent lives in their local communities.

Our experienced assessment team - now joined by some new colleagues - are always available to work together with you, from arranging introductions, assessments and visits, all the way through to the move being complete and the kettle going on.

Get in touch today

If you'd like to make a referral, you can do so by clicking on any of the services in this newsletter, or call us on:

0333 321 4881

Email us at:

referrals@lifeways.co.uk



Kirsty Byrne
Referral Assessment
Practitioner



Monique Caton
Referral Assessment
Practitioner



Emma Smith
Referral Assessment
Practitioner



Charlene Barlow
Referral Assessment
Practitioner



Lifeways' experts champion co-production at national ARC England event

by Gareth Roberts, Quality Director

ARC England is a leading membership body representing providers of services for people with learning disabilities and autism. It exists to improve lives by supporting everyone involved in planning or delivering care and support. Lifeways has been a member since 2003.

At a recent national event hosted by ARC England, I was incredibly proud to see Lifeways' Quality Checkers showcasing co-production at its very best!

Our Quality Checkers are the people we support who take on an active role in improving the quality of our services. The event brought together organisations from across the sector, along with people they support, to explore how co-production can grow and improve even more.

We have a continued commitment to co-production, where the people we support work alongside us to shape and improve our services. This was recognised and celebrated at the event and our brilliant Quality Checkers shared a powerful video showing how they identified issues, suggested solutions and helped deliver meaningful change at Lifeways.

It was so exciting to see them present and share their co-production journey and the positive improvements they've made. We now have over 200 Quality Checkers and they are incredible ambassadors for our organisation.

One innovative idea discussed was cross-organisation quality checking, where people supported by one provider assess and help improve services at another. It's a really exciting concept and that kind of collaboration could raise the bar for co-production sector-wide and is something that we are keen to champion!

Jessie, one of our Quality Checker's and a member of the Lifeways Executive Advisory Panel (LEAP), said:

I was very nervous to be presenting at ARC England, but I feel proud that I was able to provide information to other organisations. I think it's a good idea helping others learn and grow.

Because I am so passionate about it, I enjoy being a driving force behind it. I feel like we have really good quality checkers who can help others.

The people we support are amazing and their involvement in reviewing what we do, how we do it, and helping shape improvements is invaluable to Lifeways.

Victoria Buyer, ARC England Policy Lead, said: "We were delighted to welcome the Lifeways Quality Checkers to our Making Co-Production Real Network. Their lived experience and commitment to quality is helping to make co-production not just an idea, but a reality in people's everyday lives."

We're excited to be part of this important national conversation and even prouder of the people we support, who are helping shape the future of care both within Lifeways and across the wider sector.



Pictured above: Jessie, a Lifeways Executive Advisory Panel (LEAP) member

Meet Tanya – Lifeways' first ever Chairperson of new Family Advisory Panel

by Andrea Kinkade, Chief Executive Officer

We're proud to announce that Tanya Farley, has been appointed as the first ever Chairperson of Lifeways' newly formed Family Advisory Panel.

Tanya, a very determined mum-of-four with a passion for making a difference, was chosen by fellow panel members to lead the group. As the mother of James, who receives supported living care from Lifeways in Stockport, she brings years of lived experience to her new role.

The independent panel was set up following the success of our Quality Checkers initiative. Its aim is to further shape and strengthen the quality of care and support across Lifeways' services, giving a stronger voice to families whose loved ones receive support.

Tanya got involved with the panel after reaching out to me directly and we were able to have an honest conversation about her son's story and her hopes for improving supported living. She felt it was time to step up and use her experiences to drive change.

As Tanya herself explained:

I'm passionate about sharing what I've learned, making sure families are heard, and keeping standards high across services. It's about identifying best practice and sharing it.

Bringing deep insight from lived experience

Having spent years navigating the health and care systems, Tanya has a deep understanding of the challenges faced by families like hers. She is also the organiser of Autism: A Hands-On Approach conference, which has been running for more than 20 years. More recently, she has delivered online workshops designed to create a safe space to open up conversations around key topics. You can find out more at www.autismahandsonapproach.co.uk.

The title of "Chair" came as a surprise to Tanya, but her deep understanding and determination to create positive change made her a natural choice to lead the panel. Tanya recognises that



families have valuable knowledge which can be used to benefit not only their own loved ones, but other families and Lifeways' team members too. She is determined to create a culture where people feel empowered to speak up when something isn't working to make things better for everyone.

A key focus for the panel will be promoting open communication, peer-to-peer auditing, and encouraging continuous improvement in care. Tanya would love to see families visit and give feedback on other services, as well as their own, offering a shared perspective that could raise standards.

Personally, I'm thrilled to be working with Tanya and the Family Advisory Panel. Their insights are essential, not just for improving the quality of care, but for supporting our teams and shaping the future of Lifeways.

A stronger voice

The Panel is one way that families can help drive meaningful positive change and have a stronger voice at every level of our organisation. It will provide honest feedback on what Lifeways is doing well, where improvements can be made, and how we can build stronger relationships with families.

Our long-term goal is to set up similar panels in every region of the UK, creating a national network of engaged families. Members of our Executive Leadership Team will attend each panel, to listen, learn, and be held accountable. The Lifeways' Board will also hear the feedback, truly linking the family experience to the governance of our organisation.



Welcoming new people and teams in the North West and Yorkshire

by Amy Gilbert,
Managing Director, Supported Living

I am very excited to share that Lifeways has proudly welcomed 180 new team members and 60 new people to support, as part of our newly launched supported living services in Rotherham and Tameside.

We're delighted to welcome these new colleagues to our team. It's a privilege to work with new people and to learn from them as they begin the next stage of their career with us. Many of the colleagues joining us already know the people they support and we're here to make it as easy as possible for them to continue delivering great care.



Our new team members officially joined our Supported Living division in April 2025 and have been taking part in our learning and induction programmes to become familiar with Lifeways and how we work. They will be working across 15 locations (five in Rotherham and 10 in Tameside) where they will continue to fulfil their shared goal of delivering high-quality supported living services.

Building stronger support together

At Lifeways, we care deeply about providing outstanding support and helping people with complex needs to live their best lives as independently as possible. Every opportunity we get to support someone new is an honour.

We've already begun work in both Tameside and Rotherham and are looking forward to working with the people we support, their families and local partners to ensure that these services deliver exceptional support. We will be involving everyone in shaping the way we work and together look forward to delivering the best possible outcomes.



Lifeways has grown significantly over the past 18 months, delivering more support in more places around the UK. This expansion is part of Lifeways' ongoing transformation programme which has seen the company invest more than £10m in technology, property and systems since 2023.

The plan focuses upon four key areas:

- *Providing the best possible care and support*
- *Recruiting, developing and retaining exceptional people*
- *Using technology to improve lives*
- *Becoming the employer of choice*

Social care is complex and challenging and there is always more to do and we never stop learning. The way in which we listen, learn, and embed change is critical to our progression. Every time we are selected to deliver support, we see it as a validation that we're on the right path - creating more opportunities to help people lead their very best life and enabling more colleagues to build a rewarding career in social care.



Talk Time Club helps to create new guide to tackle social isolation



by Jodie Allen-Cawley,
Head of Quality

“How can I make new friends in a safe and inclusive way?” This important question was raised at a recent Talk Time Club session - a relaxed space where the people we support chat directly with leaders at Lifeways.

I’m delighted to say that this powerful question has now sparked something great! Together we’ve created a brand new guide, full of ideas and suggestions to help people build meaningful connections and tackle social isolation.



The guide is packed with tips, advice and resources, and also showcases opportunities on how to get involved, join in, be part of a team and even support others through initiatives such as the Lifeways Executive Advisory Panel (LEAP).

Gareth Roberts, Quality Director at Lifeways shared:

Staying socially active can have a huge impact on wellbeing, and we understand how important it is for the people we support to have friends with shared interests and experiences.

Our new guide has got lots of ways for the people we support to reach out to others, join clubs, volunteer and more. I was really impressed with the ideas that were discussed in Talk Time Club and I’m sure the guide will be a big help for anyone looking to expand their social circle.

This new guide is another great example of how Lifeways works with the people we support to co-produce resources to help people live independent, fulfilling lives. To see a copy of the guide please visit our website and search for “Talk Time Club”.

Trevor’s transformation: building a home, skills, and a voice with Lifeways

by Melonie Duffin, Registered Manager

When 18-year-old Trevor moved into his new Lifeways apartment in Trafford, I knew it was the start of something special. Trevor had spent time in temporary accommodation in Denton, arranged by the local authority, but had felt unable to settle. The move to Lifeways offered Trevor the stability and sense of belonging that he hadn’t experienced before.

Trevor now has a network of support around him, which is something he’s not used to, but he is embracing the opportunity to find his own way. The service is designed specifically to help young people live as independently as possible and, with support to help shape and build new skills, Trevor is really starting to thrive.

Creating a home

Initially, Trevor found the transition challenging, as he has never really stayed anywhere long enough to call it “home”. When he first moved in, he turned up with everything he owned in a few bags. We talked about what it meant to feel secure and settled and the support that we could provide.

Gradually, Trevor began to embrace the idea of making a home. With guidance, he took on practical tasks such as building furniture and added personal touches with artwork and inspirational quotes.



Cultivating skills, celebrating talents

Part of our role is to support people to build up their independence by helping them develop practical skills and Trevor is doing just that – he is learning to cook and do woodworking while also exploring his creative talents. As he told me “I can act, rap, sing, dance, you name it.”

Currently he is honing his stand-up comedy skills and hopes to record in a music studio. We are also helping him explore further opportunities, such as college courses. Sharing his hopes for the future, Trevor said:

***My talents could go somewhere.
Eventually I’d really like a family and a job
- but I also know this may take time.***

What I am most proud of is the way Trevor is finding his voice - he is now involved in creating a newsletter and is set to join Lifeways’ Quality Checkers team – people we support who help to evaluate and shape the support we provide. Trevor has come a long way in such a short time, turning his apartment into a home, learning new skills, building his confidence and now sharing his voice, not just for himself but for others as well.

Riley's story: Holding on and finding hope

by Riley, a person we support

From the brink of despair to the threshold of a bright future, Riley's story is both personal and painful in parts. But Riley believes that if his story can inspire just one person who is having similar struggles, it's all been worth it. In his own words, here is Riley's story.



When I was 20, I found myself at my lowest point. After spending months in hospital, I felt empty, like nothing would ever get better.

But my story goes back further. I grew up in Preston, and my childhood was unstable, full of fear and trauma, unsure of how to explain what I felt or ask for help. By my early teens, I was struggling with intense highs and lows, and by 16, I was in a mental health unit for the first time.

Hospital was tough. There were routines, little if any privacy, and the feeling that you'd lost parts of yourself. I moved between different hospitals for years, trying different medications and treatments. I started to believe I'd never get better, that hospital was going to be part of my life forever.

Things got even harder after I was discharged and placed in a homeless hostel. It felt like all the support I'd had disappeared overnight. Eventually, after another nine-month hospital stay, I moved into a supported living service run by SIL, part of Lifeways. I was still feeling lost - and one night, I made a plan to end my life.

But something unexpected happened. A support worker noticed something was wrong and reached out. He listened. He didn't judge or try to fix everything in that moment. He just stayed with me. That kindness gave me the tiniest thread of hope.



From there, I began to rebuild. Slowly. I got the help I needed through community mental health services, and I started to feel more like myself again.

These days, I live with my dog Lyra in my own flat. She's helped me through so much, especially the rough nights. Music has been a positive outlet too. I write and produce songs from my little home studio, and I even released an album last year, capturing the journey from struggle to hope.

I'm currently studying counselling and psychotherapy at university, hoping to become the kind of therapist I needed when I was younger. I've also started my own community interest company called Grow With Hope, a small organisation that supports young people with their mental health and grief. We run workshops in schools and are building a free mental health app.

My journey hasn't been perfect, and I still face challenges, but I'm living a life I once didn't think was possible. If you're going through something right now, please know: it can get better. There is always hope. And you are never alone.

I'm living a life I didn't think was possible. I never thought I'd get to a place where I love life. I never thought I'd be able to help others, to give back, to build something that matters. But here I am.

[Watch Riley tell his story on our website.](#)



Team Lifeways raises over £500 for Lancashire children's hospice

by Gemma Munjic, Service Manager

This summer, something really special happened in Leyland. Alongside the people we support, their families and my incredible team, we took part in the Derian House Children's Hospice 'Colour Run'. Together we raised over £500 for a truly amazing cause!

In total, around 28 of us came along from Reiver House and The Meadows services. Some were there to run, some to cheer, and all of us were there to be part of something that felt joyful and meaningful. It was colourful, messy, and completely heart-warming.

We try to organise at least one big event a year where everyone from team members, families, and the people we support can get involved. This one was about giving back to the community and making memories while we do it.

We kicked things off with a Zumbathon (which definitely got us all moving!), then headed into the run. Each stage brought a different burst of colour - pink, yellow, green, blue - and we joined in on the yellow run. My own family even travelled up from



Dorset to take part, which meant the world to me. They had the best day.

I'll admit, I wasn't sure that we would hit our fundraising goal of £500. Donations were a little slow at first. But thanks to everyone's generosity, including support from family and some of our Lifeways leadership team, we raised a total of £545. I'm so proud of what we achieved.

Derian House provides incredible care and, with their services costing £6 million a year, events like this one matter. The Colour Run itself raised £22,000 in total, so to know we were a small part of that is something I'm very proud of.

We're already thinking about next year and looking forward to more fundraising fun and frolics!

Lifeways celebrates success at the Care Home Awards 2025

by Karen Jones, Managing Director, Residential

On Friday 16 May, at the prestigious Care Home Awards in London, Lifeways proudly walked away with the Best Use of Care Management Software award plus three highly commended trophies!

The Care Home Awards are an annual event in the UK that recognise and celebrate excellence, innovation, and achievement within the care home sector. We were delighted to be recognised for the way in which we transformed our approach to care by introducing Nourish, a digital care management system, which enables us to record, plan and coordinate care in real time, and Deputy, a digital rostering system, which give our teams control over their own work patterns.

Lifeways was also highly commended in three categories

- ***Best for nursing care***
- ***Best facilities management***
- ***Best for specialist care***



I am so proud that all our teams' hard work, passion and commitment to delivering excellent support has been recognised at the Care Home Awards.

We're especially delighted to have won the **Best Use of Care Management Software** award after we introduced Nourish and Deputy to our business in early 2024. In just over a year, and after a monumental 'one team' effort, we have rolled these game-changing pieces of software out to our incredible frontline teams.

The results have been amazing and it is all thanks to our teams who have embraced the change and helped us transform how we manage our support.

This is the first time we've entered the Care Home Awards, so to come away with a win and highly commended in three categories is an exceptional reflection on the extraordinary people who make Lifeways what it is.



Seaside Surprises and Studio Sessions: “30 Wishes” sparks joy

by Lynne Goodall,
Quality Personalisation Officer

I am delighted to be able to share that some of the first winners of our “30 Wishes” initiative are from the North West!

The idea behind 30 Wishes is simple – to help dreams come true for the people we support. Launched as part of our 30th anniversary celebrations, we invited team members to nominate people they support who could do with an extra boost from a dream day out, an unforgettable experience or a spectacular sports or music event. Nominations are then reviewed and judged by members of the Lifeways Executive Advisory Panel (LEAP), made up of people we support.

Robert’s big day out rewards his community spirit

Robert, who lives in one of our supported living services in Manchester, was stunned to hear he’d won a special day out at the seaside. He was nominated because of the amount he does to help out around his service.

“I never thought something good like this could happen to me,” said Robert. “I didn’t think people cared enough to do something like this. I feel very happy and still can’t believe it!”

Robert is planning to visit Blackpool or Southport for a memorable day by the sea. His support worker, Jackie Atkinson, shared:

To say he was overwhelmed is an understatement. It means so much to him.



Service Manager Jackie Atkinson with Robert

Stephen’s musical dream comes true

Stephen is a talented former church organist but, after COVID restrictions, he has struggled to leave his supported living service in Merseyside. But he is now about to fulfil his lifelong dream of recording in a professional studio.



Stephen and Service Manager Maria Broda

“I’m so honoured to be chosen for a 30 Wishes award,” said Stephen. “My dream has always been to record in a studio and I’m so happy I’ll be able to achieve it.”



Maria Broda, the service manager, added:

It’s a proud moment for us. Knowing Stephen will achieve his dream brings joy to the whole team.



Keep an eye out for more incredible stories as we continue to grant special wishes during our 30th anniversary year.

Current vacancies in the North West



Supported living for 8 people

Priory Road

Liverpool, Merseyside

Purpose-built apartments

- ✓ Near to Liverpool City Centre
- ✓ Support available 24/7
- ✓ Mental health specialism

Priory Road offers eight self-contained one-bedroom apartments in a residential area of Liverpool. Each apartment includes a bedroom, kitchen-diner and bathroom with a shower. Shared laundry rooms are available to all and the property has a paved area to the front with parking available at the rear.

Priory Road is suitable for people with mental health conditions. We provide support to people of all ages, assisting them to engage with activities they enjoy, pursue hobbies and interests, attend college courses and be active in the local community.

Priory Road is conveniently located near to local stores, restaurants, pubs, takeaways and Stanley Park. Liverpool City Centre is a few minutes away by bus and there are excellent transport links to Southport, Manchester and Chester, perfect for day trips and exploring the area.

[Read more](#)



Supported living for 7 people

Poachers

Warrington, Cheshire

Shared House

- ✓ Mental health specialism
- ✓ Annual Blackpool trip
- ✓ Accessible garden

Poachers Lane is ideal for a woman of any age. The women we support here enjoy their routines, keeping busy as well as some peace and quiet. Their interests include shopping, cooking, listening to music, watching television, going to the cinema, arts and crafts, socialising, and spending time in the community.

The main property has four ensuite bedrooms, an open-plan kitchen and dining room, a lounge area and a laundry room. In addition there is also a self-contained accessible apartment here, which has one bedroom, an open-plan kitchen and lounge area, and a wet room style bathroom. There are also two bedsits which both have a small bedroom, a kitchen, a living room and a bathroom. There's also an accessible garden.

Day trips to Southport or Wales are favourites and each year, people enjoy going to Blackpool as a group to enjoy a five-course meal and a show.

[Read more](#)



Residential care for 4 people

Weston Road

Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire

Shared house

- ✓ Learning disabilities
- ✓ Autism
- ✓ Life-changing residential care

We are ready to welcome an individual of any age or gender to join the community at Weston Road.

There are four spacious bedrooms, a large kitchen diner, a lounge with French windows opening onto an outdoor eating area plus an additional eating and dining room to the front. On the first floor there are four individual bedrooms and separate toilet. Outside, there is a small front garden with trees for privacy and a larger enclosed garden to the rear.

Located in a residential area of Meir, just outside Stoke-on-Trent, Weston Road is close to a large health centre, education and fitness centre, local shops, numerous takeaways and café's, a post office and a village hall with regular events. Nearby there is a football club and a rugby club. Local bus services take you to Stoke on Trent and larger attractions and amenities.

[Read more](#)

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