

ISSUE 12 | SUMMER 2025

lifewayslinks

The Lifeways newsletter for Scotland

In this issue:

- Page 3** Lifeways' experts champion co-production at national ARC England event
- Page 4** Meet Tanya – Lifeways' first ever Chairperson of new Family Advisory Panel
- Page 5** Talk Time Club helps to create new guide to tackle social isolation
- Page 5** Pammy finds her perfect fit at Lorne Street
- Page 6** Loch Park secures highest ever rating!
- Page 7** Sharing my journey for Pride Month
- Page 7** Lifeways celebrates success at the Care Home Awards 2025

Interactive PDF



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



Hello, I'm Janine Forshaw and I'm your local Lifeways Business Development and Relationship Manager for Scotland.



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 janine.forshaw@lifeways.co.uk.

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



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.



Craig Chalmers
Senior Assessment
Manager

Our experienced assessment team - now joined by our new colleague for Scotland - 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



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.



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”.

Pammy finds her perfect fit at Lorne Street

by Chris Fitzsimmons, Registered Manager

One of the best parts of my job is seeing someone truly settle into a place they can call home. That’s exactly what’s happened with Pammy since she joined us at Lorne Street in Edinburgh.

Pammy had been living at home with her mum, but when her mum’s health meant she could no longer provide the care Pammy needed, her family started looking for alternative support. They tried an external agency for a while, but it wasn’t the right fit. Pammy and her family knew she needed something more personal, more supportive and, most importantly, somewhere she could really belong. Together with her social worker, they visited a number of places. Each time, something wasn’t quite right.

That all changed when they visited Lorne Street. From the moment Pammy walked through the door she instantly felt relaxed. She told us she felt comfortable straight away and, even better, she already knew the other two people we support here from activities, clubs and day services - there was an instant connection that made her feel at ease.

When it was time for Pammy’s two-week review with her social worker, her sister and the support team, Pammy shared that she loves her new home, loves the people she lives with, and loves the team who support her. She told us she’s excited to spend the rest of her life at Lorne Street! Hearing those heartfelt words made us all very emotional.



Pammy’s sister later told me that after visiting so many places to find the right support for Pammy, she was starting to wonder if the right service even existed and was considering supporting Pammy herself. But when they came to Lorne Street, she knew straight away it was the one. Seeing Pammy feel so relaxed and happy from day one gave her peace of mind, too.

For us, this is what it’s all about - helping someone find not just support, but a home where they feel safe, valued, and connected. Pammy has brought such joy to our house already, and we’re so glad she’s part of our community.

Welcome home, Pammy. We’re delighted you’ve found your perfect fit at Lorne Street.

Loch Park secures highest ever rating!

by Fiona Barrie-Higgins,
Regional Director
for Supported Living in Scotland

I am so proud to share some brilliant news from Loch Park, our unique day service set in the beautiful Banffshire countryside near Keith. After an unannounced inspection by Care Inspectorate Scotland, we've achieved our highest ever ratings! I'm absolutely delighted for our incredible team who work so hard to provide the highest quality service for the amazing people we support.

Loch Park is a vibrant place, supporting up to 30 people with learning disabilities and autism. It's so much more than a service - it's a community, with welcoming indoor spaces, gardens, and workshops that give people the chance to take part in meaningful activities both indoors and out.



During the inspection in May, we were rated 'Very Good' by the Care Inspectorate Scotland in four areas:

- How well we support people's wellbeing
- How good is our leadership
- How good is our staff team
- How well is our care and support planned.

We were delighted to receive a 'Good' rating for our setting and even more thrilled to be rated 'Excellent' - the highest possible rating - for "people getting the most out of life."



For more information on
Loch Park, click here

Key highlights from the report included:

- People had incredibly positive experiences due to the inclusive culture and ethos within the service
- Work-based activities had a significant positive impact on people's self-worth and confidence
- People had gained confidence and built meaningful connections with their local community
- Leaders had a positive and collaborative approach to quality assurance
- People had enough staff to give them the care and support they needed
- The outdoor environment had a positive impact on people, supporting independence and positive mental health
- Care plans were person-centred, accessible and respectfully written.

Significant strengths

Reading the inspector's feedback was truly inspiring. They recognised our inclusive culture and how it gives people incredibly positive experiences. They saw how our work-based activities build self-worth, confidence, and strong community connections. They also noted how our team members' kindness and attentiveness foster trusting relationships. They even described some

aspects of our support as "innovative and sector leading" - praise that means so much.

One of my favourite parts of the report was seeing how inspectors appreciated how people in the service had "enormous pride in their work for the local community. People were enabled to be champions in the community through various workplace activities and charitable endeavours."

Of course, there's always room to improve and we are always listening and learning as part of our ongoing development.

When I think about this achievement, I think about the dedication I see every single day from our team. They work hard to make sure Loch Park is a joyful, safe, and empowering place. The fact that we've gone from our last inspection in 2017 with two 'Very Good' ratings to now achieving four 'Very Good's, one 'Good', and an 'Excellent' is a real testament to that commitment.

This result reflects what makes Loch Park so special: a place where people are supported to exceed their own expectations, develop skills, connect with others, and truly thrive. I'm beyond proud to lead such a passionate and caring team.

Lifeways' services in Scotland currently have a 100% compliance rate and a string of inspections in the last 12 months revealed consistently high ratings and standards.

Sharing my journey for Pride Month

by Clare, a person we support

Hello everyone, I want to share with you how I celebrated Pride Month and what it means to me.

My name is Clare, and I have a brother named Daniel. We both came out as gay and lesbian when we were teenagers, and our journey has been one of love, acceptance and pride.

Our mum has always been overprotective, but she is also incredibly proud of us. She has never been ashamed to show her support and love for her children, and that makes all the difference.

Throughout my life, I've learned that people need to respect our wishes and understand that being gay or lesbian is just a part of who we are. We are still the same human beings, deserving of love, respect, and kindness. Pride Month is a time to celebrate our identities, to be visible, and to remind everyone that everyone deserves acceptance.



This Pride Month, my brother attended Pride events in Southampton and Brighton, and I am so proud of him for standing tall and celebrating openly. As for me, I feel grateful to live in a place where I receive full support from my support team and my neighbours in Filbert Close. As a person I try to be welcoming and understanding, and I am proud to be open about my identity.

Pride Month is not just about celebrating who we are; it's about raising awareness, fighting for equality, and fostering a world where everyone can be themselves without fear or shame. I encourage everyone to embrace love, respect, and kindness - values that bring us together.

Keep celebrating Pride! Let's continue to celebrate diversity and spread love everywhere. Clare.

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.



Current vacancies in Scotland

Heron Court

Leith, Scotland

Purpose-built apartments

- ✓ Learning disabilities
- ✓ Autism

Heron Court is a development of 24, one-bedroom apartments, in the popular district of Leith, just over a mile from Edinburgh City Centre. There are six modern and bright apartments on each of the four floors, with all levels accessible by lift. Eight are slightly larger with a living room, separate kitchen, bedroom and wet room. The remaining 16 have an open plan kitchen and living area, bedroom and bathroom with level access shower.

Heron Court is ideal for people with learning disabilities or autism, who would enjoy living in a modern apartment whilst receiving the right level of support for them to live independent, fulfilling lives. Our dedicated team are here to support them whatever they choose, whether that is learning a new skill such as cooking, trying a new hobby, making new friends or taking the first step into work or college.

At Heron Court people can enjoy being part of a vibrant community with the option of peace and quiet when they want it. The area offers a number of amenities right on the doorstep, including the riverside 'Water of Leith' walkway as well as seafood bistros, bars and cafes along the waterfront. Closer to home, the Pitt Market is a lively venue with bars and street food vendors. For those who enjoy being active, Leith Victoria swimming pool, Leith Links park and several local gyms are nearby. Edinburgh City Centre is less than two miles away with all of its beautiful and historic attractions.

Read more



Supported living for 24 people



The service could not be better placed for the individuals who live here. We provide everyone with support packages tailored specifically to their needs to live as independently as they possibly can. We have all the facilities we need right on the doorstep and we are only a mile and a half from Edinburgh, one of the most vibrant and historic cities in Scotland.

Johnathon Hughes, Registered Manager at Heron Court

Follow us on social:

 [linkedin.com/company/lifewaysgroup](https://www.linkedin.com/company/lifewaysgroup)

 [facebook.com/thelifewaysgroup](https://www.facebook.com/thelifewaysgroup)

 [@lifewaysgroup](https://www.instagram.com/@lifewaysgroup)

 [youtube.com/@lifewaysgroup](https://www.youtube.com/@lifewaysgroup)

[lifeways.co.uk](https://www.lifeways.co.uk)

