

ISSUE 13 | WINTER 2025

lifewayslinks

The Lifeways newsletter for the **Scotland** region

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Welcome to the
Winter edition of
Lifeways Links!

Interactive PDF

PDF



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 our winter issue of LifewaysLinks 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.

Lastly, I would like to extend to you and your loved ones our best wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year. For those not celebrating Christmas, may we wish you a restful holiday period.



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 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





by Andrea Kinkade,
Chief Executive Officer

Recently I've had the absolute pleasure of seeing hundreds of our team members and the people we support coming together to celebrate Lifeways' 30th anniversary.

Throughout August, services across the UK hosted an incredible variety of events – from garden parties and BBQs to themed celebrations and community outings. Each one was unique, but they all had something in common: a deep sense of connection, joy, and pride in the community that we've built together over the past three decades.

These parties were more than just marking a milestone – they were a celebration of the relationships, achievements and sense of community that are at the heart of everything we do.

Hundreds celebrate as Lifeways marks 30th birthday throughout the UK

The laughter, the stories shared, and the genuine love and joy we saw across the country perfectly captured what Lifeways is all about. It's these connections and celebrations that make the biggest difference to people's lives and illustrate the impact we've been able to have.

One of the things that made these events so meaningful was how they were created. Many of the celebrations were co-designed by our support teams and the people they work alongside – a true reflection of the co-production values we champion through our Lifeways Executive Advisory Panel (LEAP). It was inspiring to see everyone's creativity shine through, and even more inspiring to see how much happiness it brought to everyone involved.

This year, we've been celebrating in lots of different ways – from our staff awards to our 30 Wishes initiative, where we're helping to make dreams come true for the people we support. It's been a year of reflection, gratitude, and looking ahead with excitement.



When I think back to where we started in 1995, it's incredible to see how far we've come. From our beginnings supporting people with learning disabilities, we've grown into the UK's largest team of professionals supporting people with complex needs in the community. That growth has only been possible because of the passion, dedication, and heart of our people.

As we look to the future, I'm filled with optimism. The last 30 years have shown us what's possible when we work together with compassion and purpose for the benefit of the people we support. And if the celebrations this year are anything to go by, the next 30 years are going to be just as rewarding.

Thank you to everyone who made our anniversary so memorable – here's to continuing our journey, together.

Groundbreaking partnership sets new standard for care training

by Karen Jones,
Managing Director, Residential

I'm proud to share how a pioneering partnership at Abbeymoor has been hailed as a blueprint for how social and health care can work together to improve lives.

Abbeymoor, a residential Neurological Care Centre in Newcastle, supports up to 40 adults with acquired brain injuries and neurological conditions.

Earlier this year we partnered with Northumbria University and the Community Acquired Brain Injury Service (CABIS) to embed two final-year occupational therapy students directly into the service.

Typically, university placements tend to be quite short, so we created a hands-on placement that allowed the students to become part of the team at Abbeymoor. This immersive approach

allowed them to work alongside team members every day giving them time to fully understand each person's individual needs.

The two students, Chloe Stockdale and Elicia Bordoley, made a real difference during their time with us, introducing changes like personalised room layouts, communication boards, and tailored group activities. They also supported our team by delivering training on the effects of brain injury and how to better support residents in their daily routines.

As Louise Watson, our Registered Manager at Abbeymoor, said:

This placement wasn't just about learning – it made a real difference to our residents. The students brought fresh ideas and helped us strengthen our focus on person-centred care. Services like ours have proven they can be dynamic learning environments for future healthcare professionals and we're so proud to be leading the way in creating these opportunities.



Chloe, who has since qualified as an Occupational Therapist, reflected on her experience:

"It's been a privilege. I feel lucky to have had this opportunity."

CABIS is now holding up this initiative as a model for integrated, proactive care – and I couldn't agree more. We're proud to be part of a groundbreaking collaboration that's making a difference to the people we support. Driving change and innovation in the sector has long been part of Lifeways' DNA, and this latest partnership continues that tradition.

Not only are we helping to equip future professionals with invaluable experience and expertise, but we're doing it while also improving outcomes for the people in our services. To help future placements thrive, our team has developed a full induction plan, including training, mentoring, and resources to help students settle in and understand their role. Now that Chloe and Elicia have qualified, they're supporting the next group of students – continuing the cycle of learning and improvement.

As Lisa Pullen, Occupational Therapist at CABIS, summed it up: "This approach shows what's possible when care homes and health services work together. It's a win-win for residents, staff and students."



Celebrating success: Lifeways shines in national awards!

by Andrea Kinkade, Chief Executive Officer

As we mark our 30th anniversary, it's been an incredible last few months for Lifeways from reaching the LaingBuisson Awards shortlist to a royal training award and our latest Great British Care Awards win – all of which are the result of a shared commitment to helping people live their best lives.

I'm absolutely delighted that our Lifeways leadership team has been shortlisted for Leadership Team of the Year at this year's LaingBuisson Awards. These awards are among the most respected in our sector, and to be recognised for our transformational leadership and commitment to continuous improvement is a huge honour.

This recognition reflects the incredible progress we've made through our organisation-wide transformation programme, driving significant improvements in quality, innovation, and workforce development, creating environments where both our teams and the people we support can grow and thrive.

Royal seal of approval for commitment to learning and development

Our commitment to learning and development has been awarded with the prestigious Princess Royal Training Award for 2025. Formally approved by HRH The Princess Royal, this honour places us among just 57 organisations across the UK to be recognised this year, alongside respected names such as John Lewis & Partners, JCB, and OVO Energy and is a remarkable achievement.

As James Westwood-Beere, Chief People Officer, said:

It's an incredible moment that showcases the strength of our culture, the passion of our teams, and the difference that outstanding learning and leadership can make across our organisation.



Regional care champion – Woodbury View!

At the Great British Care Awards – West Midlands Region, our team at Woodbury View received the Home Care Team Award and will now go through to the national final in 2026!

The judges praised the team's care as "truly exemplary," highlighting their extraordinary dedication to a person recovering from serious illness. Their family member shared, "I never worry about whether they are happy or well cared for because I know they have the best care possible," - this meant everything to us!



Nicola Driscoll, Service Manager, was extremely proud of her team and shared: "Winning this award isn't just about one moment - it represents the consistent teamwork, integrity, and heart that define Woodbury View. I couldn't be prouder of my colleagues for always going the extra mile, supporting each other, and truly living our values."

Managing Director of Lifeways' Residential Division, Karen Jones added:

Awards like this are really important for raising standards across the sector. We're thrilled to now represent the West Midlands in the national finals in February 2026, and we'll continue to show what person-centred, compassionate care really means.

As I have said before, any award recognition is ultimately a reflection of the extraordinary people who deliver quality services to the people we support every day. While I'm really proud of our success, I'm even prouder of what these awards represent - the dedication, passion and professionalism our teams show day-in, day-out to make a difference to people's lives.

My long journey to success

by Leo, a person we support

Leo bravely shared her mental health journey with us, which she describes as long, difficult, but ultimately successful. Today she is thriving at Brunswick Gardens - a supported living service, where she enjoys group activities, has made new friends and has grown hugely in confidence.



Please note: The following story contains references to suicide and mental health struggles, which some readers may find distressing. If you are feeling overwhelmed or struggling with your mental health, please reach out for support - see details at the end of this article.

Where do I start? My name is Lenona, my friends call me Leo, and my story has been a long one - a difficult one, but a successful one.

When I was younger, I started hearing voices, but it wasn't too much of a concern and I brushed it off as my mind playing tricks on me. But then I started to hear negative voices and they would say things like, "You're being followed," or "You're in danger," and honestly, that did scare me. Sometimes I would think people were following me and that I was in danger. I would walk and walk and ended up in the most bizarre places and was reported as a missing person.

Eventually, it was time to get some mental health support. I think I was 16 or 17 when I had my first appointment, and that's when I first heard the term "psychosis". Unfortunately, before I got any sort of diagnosis for that, I tried to take my own life. I ended up in hospital and I was just so out of touch with reality.



Nothing made sense. I could see spiders all over the walls, I could see bugs under my skin, and these voices were just being horrible. In the end, I was sectioned. From then on, I was in and out of hospital for about three years. Then, one day, I got transferred to somewhere in Sunderland, and I was there for maybe two years. I thought I was never going to get better.

Eventually, I got diagnosed with treatment-resistant schizoaffective disorder. Then one day, I got put on a new medication and things started looking up. It didn't really get rid of the voices or hallucinations, but it made them much better.

Soon enough, I found my feet. I went into a doctor's meeting, and they went: "We think we're going to start looking for somewhere for you to live". My social worker eventually found somewhere called Brunswick Gardens and a couple of weeks later, I got visited by the Lifeways team. I had loads of questions -

and quite literally every question I asked was answered the way I wanted.

It was like: "Can I decorate it my own way?" "Yes, of course you can." "Can I have pets?" "Yes, of course you can."

It was such a positive meeting and I was really glad. At first, when I moved in, I was like, "Am I going to meet new friends, or am I going to be lonely?" but over the half a year I've been here, I've made loads of friends. I'm confident, I go to support groups, I go to art groups, I go on walks with other residents, I pop in for a cup of tea or a chat. I'm just loving life at the minute, and I can't thank my family, my friends, and the staff enough for helping me out. Now, I can't wait to see what the future is like.

Samaritans: Call **116 123** (free, 24/7) or visit [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)

Shout: Text SHOUT to **85258** for free, confidential support 24/7

Mind: Visit [mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk) or call **0300 123 3393**

Papyrus (for under 35s): Call **0800 068 4141** or text **07860 039967**

Scotland celebrates a clutch of inspection results!

by Fiona Barrie,
Regional Director, Scotland

I'm delighted to share some brilliant news from our Scottish services. Over the past few months, our teams have received a series of excellent Care Inspectorate reports, including two service registrations and one for our Castle Street residential care home in Rutherglen. Each one reflects the dedication, heart and professionalism our colleagues bring to supporting people every day.



Glasgow South & East:

At Living Ambitions Limited, Glasgow South and East 3, inspectors awarded us the second-highest possible scores across every area, with wellbeing, the staff team and care planning all rated 5 – Very Good.

Reading the report, I was especially proud to see our team recognised for building “exceptional” relationships that genuinely enhance people’s quality of life. Inspectors also praised the stimulating activities on offer, which help people grow in independence and confidence, alongside the meticulous approach our colleagues take to health and medication management.

Care planning was also commended, with families regularly involved in reviews and decision-making. Importantly, no areas for improvement were identified - a testament to the team’s consistent, thoughtful support.

Glasgow North & West:

Our Glasgow North and West registration also received 5 – Very Good for both wellbeing and staffing. Inspectors noted how warm, genuine interactions with our team have helped people make positive progress in their mental health and wellbeing. People told inspectors they felt happy, relaxed and supported to develop their independent living skills, which is exactly the kind of impact we strive for.



The report also highlighted strong healthcare coordination and praised the team’s responsiveness and openness to guidance. It also recognised the benefits of a stable support team and clear communication processes, which help maintain continuity of care.

Castle Street, Rutherglen:

One of the most uplifting results came from Castle Street in Rutherglen, where all five areas - wellbeing, leadership, staff team, setting and care planning - are now rated Good.

This represents a significant improvement from last year, when two areas were rated Adequate, and reflects the team’s hard work and commitment over the past 12 months.

Inspectors praised the warm, respectful relationships between staff and residents, and

celebrated the home’s focus on encouraging choice, whether that’s enjoying concerts, baking or getting involved in gardening. The home’s refreshed environment, including redecorated communal spaces and personalised bedrooms, was also noted.

With a more stable permanent team now in place, reliance on agency staff has reduced, and leadership has strengthened governance and embedded quality assurance processes. I’m particularly pleased that residents and families are playing an active role in shaping care and daily activities.

I am so proud of our incredible teams across Scotland whose dedication to providing excellent care and support has been recognised in these latest inspections. These results are a testament to the positive difference our colleagues make through their work every day and we all remain focused on delivering the best possible experience for the people we support and their families.

Recognition for Johnathon in our regional CHOICE awards

by Alouise Mansfield, Reward Manager

They say teamwork is the secret that makes ordinary people achieve extraordinary results, and our CHOICE Awards celebrate the amazing people and teams who go above and beyond to live and breathe our CHOICE values.

One team member who exemplifies this is Johnathon Hughes, our Registered Manager at Heron Court in Edinburgh, who has just been named the regional CHOICE Award winner for Scotland! What makes this achievement even more impressive is that Johnathon has accomplished this in just two months since joining our team.

From day one, Johnathon has shown exceptional dedication to our *Charter for Involvement*, ensuring that the voices of the people we support are not only heard but actively acted upon. His commitment to improving the Heron Court service has been remarkable. He has a natural ability to bring people together, and his focus on building strong, trusting relationships has already created a noticeable change within the team.



One of the most positive developments has been the shift in team culture. Team members now feel more listened to, valued, and confident approaching the leadership team. This has made a significant difference to morale and retention and a real testament to Johnathon's inclusive and encouraging leadership style. In every sense, he embodies our One Team value.

Our Chief Executive, Andrea Kinkade, summed up what the CHOICE Awards represent so well when she said:

Our CHOICE Awards represent the very best of what makes Lifeways special – our people. Each annual winner was chosen from hundreds of nominations made throughout the year and each has shown exceptional dedication to improving the lives of those we support while fostering positive, collaborative working environments.

Their stories demonstrate the profound impact that committed, caring individuals can have on both the people we support and their team-mates. Congratulations to all our winners! Your commitment to excellence makes a real difference every day, and we are proud to have you as part of the Lifeways family.



When Johnathon received his award, he shared a message that really reflects the spirit of our work in Scotland. He commented:

The people that I meet at Lifeways are simply fantastic and together we encourage the people we support to live their best lives every day and always want what is best for them.

I couldn't agree more. Johnathon's passion for ensuring that people live fulfilling, independent lives shines through in everything he does. His leadership, positivity, and drive to create meaningful involvement have already made a real difference at Heron Court and across the wider team.

Once again huge congratulations to Johnathon and thank you for the remarkable impact you've made in such a short time.

Castle Street gets a great new look

by Alexis Mair, Service Manager

I'm so pleased to share that our Castle Street residential service in Glasgow has had a full refurbishment, and our residents are absolutely delighted with the results! The project took five weeks to complete, and it's been so exciting for everyone to see the transformation unfold.



One of the things I'm most proud of is how involved the people we support were throughout the whole process. From choosing colours to deciding on layouts, they had a genuine say in how their home would look and feel. For us, it was important that this wasn't just a building refurbishment, but something created with the input of the people we support, tailored to their needs, and reflecting their choices.

The difference has been incredible and the people we support have really embraced the changes. Isobel now loves spending time in the newly decorated front reception - she looks completely at ease on the comfy new furniture, taking in the bright, welcoming surroundings. Stuart has been spending more time in the kitchen, happily working through his colouring books in the brighter space. He's even shared that he feels more content in himself since the

refurbishment, which honestly means the world to us.

And then there's Taylor, proudly showing off his newly decorated bedroom. He chose the colours completely independently and really enjoyed being part of the decision making.

Seeing each person take ownership of their space has been one of the true highlights for me.

Our team has noticed a difference too. They've said the whole home feels brighter, fresher, and much more uplifting and that positivity is felt by everyone. It's amazing to see how a thoughtfully designed environment can lift spirits and create a real sense of comfort and pride.



I'm very grateful to our team and so proud of the people we support. Watching them enjoy their newly refreshed home has really highlighted just how important a welcoming environment can be in supporting people to live well.



How Fergus found safety, independence and happiness in his new home

by Kirsten Whyteside, Deputy Manager

When I look back at Fergus' recent move, I can honestly say it's one of those moments that reminds me why I love working at Lifeways.

Before the move, Fergus, who is autistic, was sharing a house with another gentleman, and their relationship had become quite complicated. This brought daily challenges for both of them. On top of that, Fergus has epilepsy and living in a two-storey house meant there were environmental risks we always had to consider. It was clear Fergus needed a home that offered both safety and a sense of calm - somewhere he could truly call his own.

To support him through such a big change, we created a social story using simple sentences and pictures. We included photos of his old house, his new one, and what the inside would look like.

This helped him understand, step by step, that he'd soon have his very own space and that he wouldn't be sharing it with anyone.

I'm incredibly proud of how the whole team pulled together. They went above and beyond, some even on their own time, to make sure Fergus' new



Fergus excited to see his house for the first time and get the key!

home was ready for him. Cleaning, decorating, laying carpets, getting the furniture in place... everyone pitched in because we all knew how significant this transition would be. We wanted everything to feel familiar and reassuring from day one.

Two weeks before the move, we gave Fergus his social story and began taking him to the new flat so he could visualise the layout. The weekend

before moving day, Fergus stayed with his parents while the team moved all his belongings from the old house to the new flat. When he walked through the door for the first time, everything was already in place exactly where he expected it. We also made sure his phone, internet and TV package were set up in advance so he could settle straight in without disruption.

We also made sure that Fergus' flatmate was supported throughout the change. Because they had lived together for so long, it was important that he understood what was happening and felt reassured throughout the process.

The difference in Fergus since moving has been wonderful to see. He's more relaxed, visibly happier, and far more confident in his own space. He now leaves his bedroom more often and enjoys spending time in the lounge and is getting more involved in day-to-day activities around the home. Notably his behaviours that challenge have also reduced significantly.

Most importantly, Fergus feels safe — and we can see the positive impact that the move has had on him every single day.

Current vacancies in the Scotland



Supported Living for 9 people



Hunthill Road

Blantyre, Glasgow

Purpose-built apartments

- ✓ Autism
- ✓ Learning disabilities
- ✓ Staff office on-site
- ✓ Stairlift to the first floor

Hunthill Road consists of eight one and two-bedroom purpose-built apartments with a kitchen-diner and bathroom plus generous communal areas. Outside there's a wrap-around communal garden with planting beds and a range of seating and patio areas.

The people who live here have a wide range of interests and hobbies and also enjoy getting together in the communal lounge to celebrate birthdays, special events and holidays. Everyone is encouraged and supported to be independent and get out and about as much as they choose.

Hunthill Road is located in Blantyre, a small town on the River Clyde. There are plenty of shops, takeaways and pubs nearby, and regular buses to Glasgow and Motherwell. Local attractions include a leisure centre, Strathclyde Country Park, and a Theme Park with outdoor rides, an indoor soft play area, a bowling alley and an indoor tropical house. Calderglen Country Park and Zoo is also ten minutes away offering a great option for a day trip.



Supported Living for 3 people



Inchfad Crescent

Drumchapel, Glasgow

Spacious bungalow

- ✓ Autism
- ✓ Learning disabilities
- ✓ All male property

Inchfad Crescent is a spacious bungalow with generous communal areas and a mixed staff team. There are three-bedrooms, a living room and kitchen-diner, and two bathrooms - one is a large wet room with shower. There is also a secure, shared back garden with patio and garden seats.

The people living here are all male and enjoy a variety of hobbies and interests. The property would suit another man who likes socialising and celebrating special occasions in the communal areas – everyone loves to join in! The people we support are encouraged to be independent and get out and about as much as they like.

Located in the Drumchapel area of Glasgow, Inchfad Crescent has access to good public transport links to Glasgow City Centre, Balloch, Lock Lomond, Helensburgh Clydebank and surrounding areas.

There are many local amenities including shopping, a lively community centre, health centre and Glasgow Club. The people here like going to the shopping centres, to the cinema, bowling, restaurants and to the Leisure Centre in Drumchapel. They also love visiting the horses at a nearby ranch.



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