

ISSUE 14 | SUMMER 2026

lifewayslinks

The Lifeways newsletter for the **South West** region

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Welcome to
the Summer
edition of
Lifeways Links!

Interactive PDF



Hello, I'm George Bray and I'm your local Lifeways Business Development and Relationship Manager for the **South 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 george.bray@lifeways.co.uk.

I hope you enjoy this latest 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.

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 team members - 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.



Brooke Gossling
Referral Assessment
Practitioner



Ruby Silverman
Referral Assessment
Practitioner

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





Celebrating Lifeways' Achievements and Ambitions for 2026

by Andrea Kinkade, Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to our Summer issue of Lifeways Links. I'm delighted to share that our Annual Review for 2025/26 has been published, our yearly look back at the achievements of our brilliant team and, most importantly of all, the amazing people we support.

This is the third Annual Review in my time here as Chief Executive and I am so proud to share the remarkable progress Lifeways has made in that time; continuing our mission to support people with mental ill-health, learning disabilities, autism and complex needs to their very best lives.

I never tire of telling our story as it unfolds. I called 2023/24 our year of transformation, investing time and resources in future proofing our organisation, and I recall describing 2024/25 as a year of reward for all the hard work we have invested. Well, 2025/26 has unquestionably been a year of celebration as we have taken time to reflect not only upon our journey but also thirty years of Lifeways support – a brilliant milestone. In my experience, the very best organisations make time to celebrate success. It recognises

and re-energises hard-working team members, reminding them that the inspirational work they do – that they sometimes cease to recognise – has real, lasting impact.

One of the reasons that I am passionate about celebration is that, as anyone who has a relationship with our sector knows, the challenges are significant and enduring. I will say to anyone that will listen that our principal challenge is that need is increasing, funding is not keeping pace, and that great people are hard to attract, train and retain. But, at Lifeways, whilst we can – and do - campaign for positive change in adult social care, we can only control the work that we do and the way that we do it.

So, our approach is to relentlessly demonstrate how things can be when people with the right values, backed up by the right organisation, give their love, energy and expertise to delivering the very best support. It is this positive outlook and can-do approach, underpinned by our continued investment, that will make us the provider and employer of choice in our sector.

This is a key driver behind our You're Not Just Anyone campaign that you will see more about in the coming year. Our message is clear: if you come to work at Lifeways, you are not just anyone – you are someone with the values and desire to support people to thrive. And, if you are supported by Lifeways, you are not just anyone to us – you are an individual person that we understand, someone we will involve in co-producing your support, designing your own aspirations and outcomes, living your best life.

Some of my favourite stories within the Annual Review feature people with really complex support needs; people for whom institutionalised living has been their past (usually in placements that have failed) and would be their future were it not for the work that our teams do to support them to live with increasing independence in their community. Our aim to get everyone out of institutions and into their own home continues.

The Annual Review features our team members talking about great lives being led, improving quality, systems that work,



greater efficiency, better homes and increased colleague engagement that have led to our commissioners entrusting new support to us. You will also read about Lifeways as a listening and learning organisation: positive risk-taking, trying new things, pushing boundaries to improve lives. Lives worth celebrating!

So, as always, I finish this introduction where I started: celebration. Let us celebrate our teams, the people we support, their passionate families and, of course, hard work, investment, creativity and resilience. Thank you to everyone who has helped make our year of celebration so rewarding.



You can read the full Annual Review on the Lifeways website, where you can explore more stories, insights and achievements from across the year.

You're not just anyone

– Lifeways launches a brand-new recruitment campaign

James Westwood-Beere, Chief People Officer at Lifeways, shares why the new *You're Not Just Anyone* campaign is encouraging more people to consider a career in care.

Every day at Lifeways, our teams support more than 4,000 people across the UK to live independent and fulfilling lives. The compassion, patience and dedication shown by our team members make a real difference to the people we support and their families.



That's why we've recently launched a new recruitment campaign called *You're Not Just Anyone*, encouraging people with empathy, compassion and a genuine desire to support others to consider a career in social care.

Supporting people to live the life they choose

The campaign shines a light on the incredible work of Lifeways' frontline teams and the positive impact they have every single day.

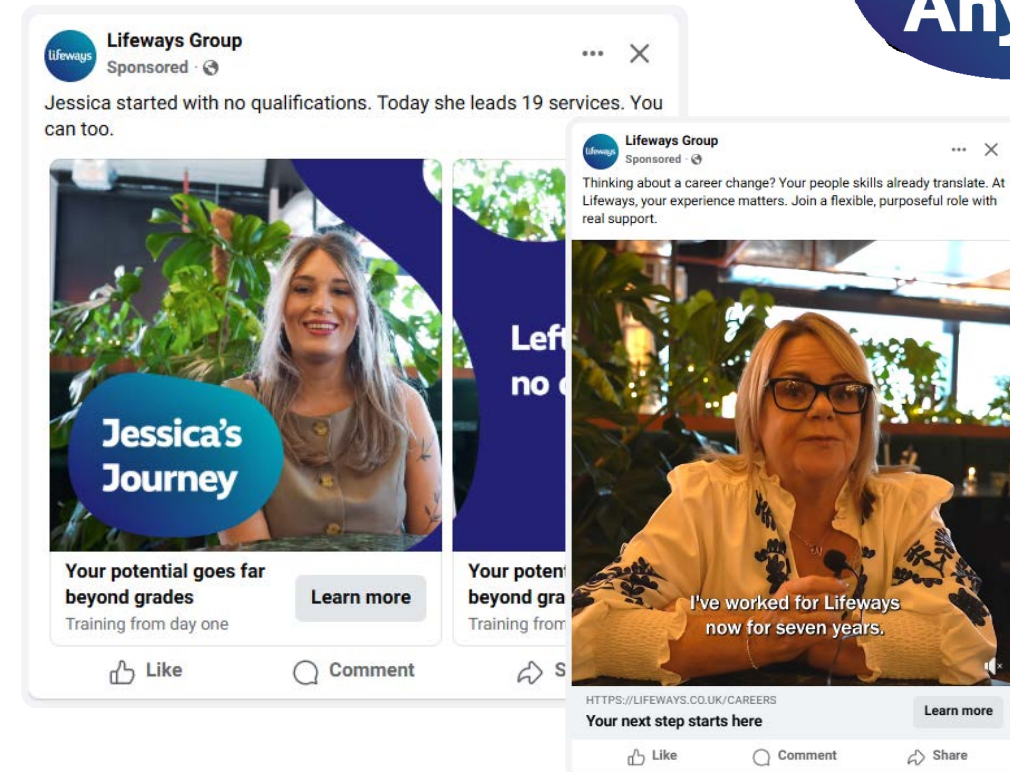
At the heart of the campaign is a powerful short film that captures the real impact of this support. The film features Jessie and Caroline, two brilliant people supported by Lifeways, and celebrates the compassion and empathy that help people live the lives they choose.

Inspiring people from all walks of life

You're Not Just Anyone is designed to inspire people from all walks of life to consider a career in care, even if they've never thought about it before.

We hope the campaign will encourage people looking for a career change, those returning to work, military veterans, retirees seeking a new purpose, young people starting their careers, and people from other sectors such as hospitality.

**You're
Not Just
Anyone**



'It takes people with care at their core'

Not just anyone can do this job. It takes people with care at their core. I'm proud to see the difference those people make every day for the individuals and families we support.



You can watch the short film featuring Jessie and Caroline, and learn more about the campaign, on the Lifeways website at www.lifeways.co.uk/careers.

National Women in Tech Award for Lifeways leader!

by Kieron Steele, Chief Financial Officer

I'm absolutely delighted to share the fantastic news that Amanda Brooke, our Chief Transformation Officer, has won the Women in Tech Award at the 2025 Women Achieving Greatness in Social Care Awards – better known as the WAGS.

The WAGS celebrate the extraordinary women leading, innovating and elevating social care, so this is a tremendous achievement. Amanda's win is also a powerful endorsement of the way Lifeways is using technology and innovation to drive improvements in the way we deliver support every day.

Amanda shared how much the recognition means to her: "I feel truly honoured by this recognition. It's a fantastic acknowledgment of Lifeways and the transformation journey we've been on and continue to drive forward.

"I'm deeply grateful to my team and everyone who has contributed to and supported the projects that made this possible. This award isn't just an individual achievement; it



reflects the collective effort of everyone who helped turn these changes into a success."

I couldn't agree more. This award speaks of her dedication, expertise and the real, measurable impact she and her team have made, not only within Lifeways, but across the wider sector. Amanda is a true leader and it's wonderful to see her recognised on the national stage.

What makes this even more special is the calibre of this year's awards. They received an unprecedented number of high-quality nominations, showcasing the passion and talent of women driving progress in social care across the UK. To be recognised in that context is a remarkable achievement.

I'm also thrilled that three more incredible team members were shortlisted:

- *Karen Roberts, our Head of Health & Clinical Governance, for the Lifetime Achievement Award*
- *Amber Kingsnorth and Caroline Lynch, shortlisted in the Social Care Superwoman category for their outstanding work supporting people with complex needs*



The winners were selected by an independent judging panel led by awards Patron and former Royal College of Nursing president, Dr Cecilia Anim, which underlines the rigour and credibility behind these accolades.

For me, this recognition is about more than a trophy. It reflects the strong leadership, innovation and clinical excellence we're building across Lifeways, shaping the way we deliver support across the organisation.

Huge congratulations again to Amanda and to all our shortlisted team members. Achievements like this show what's possible when talented, values-driven people come together with a shared purpose.

Our 30 wishes journey continues!

by Gareth Roberts, Quality Director

As part of our 30th anniversary celebrations last year, we introduced our 30 Wishes initiative, creating special, meaningful experiences for the people we support. Following its success, I'm delighted that we're continuing this into 2026.

Our teams nominate people they support for a once-in-a-lifetime treat that could be something fun, memorable or truly personal. We've loved seeing the joy these wishes bring and below are some of the latest examples.

Addison builds confidence with a trip to London

Addison, who we support in Warwickshire, was nominated for a 30 Wishes award to visit London Zoo and enjoy an overnight stay in the city.



A passionate volunteer and active member of the Mental Health LEAP Council, Addison has grown in confidence over time and is now travelling more independently and connecting with others in ways that once felt out of reach.

On hearing about the award, Addison shared:

I'm overwhelmed but feel very pleased. I have always wanted to go to London, and visiting London Zoo will be a lovely experience for me.

For Addison, this wish is a chance to recognise and celebrate how far she's come and supports her to keep building confidence for the future.

Ugne's dream trip to St James' Park

Ugne, who lives at a supported living service in Berwick-upon-Tweed, is set to enjoy an autism-friendly tour of her favourite football team Newcastle United's home ground, St James' Park.

When Ugne heard the news, she was over the moon. The visit is expected to be a truly special experience, giving her the chance to explore a place she loves in a way that feels comfortable and accessible for her.

Her Service Manager, Lorraine Noble, who nominated her for the initiative, shared just how much the trip will mean: "We can't begin to tell you how much this means for Ugne. This one trip has possibly made her year and we all know she's going to come back with a new Newcastle FC shirt."

For Ugne, this wish is about more than football – it's about confidence, excitement and creating a memory she'll treasure.



Alastair reconnects with a friend in Edinburgh

Alastair, who lives in a supported living service in Northumberland, will soon travel to Edinburgh to spend quality time with a close friend and enjoy a meal together.

He summed it up simply: "I'm so pleased. I will get to see my friend and get to go out and have food."

Reconnection and relationships are such an important part of wellbeing. For Alastair, this trip is all about friendship and having something special to look forward to.

Julie enjoys a well-deserved spa day

Julie, who has made incredible progress in her mental health recovery at our service in Preston, will soon enjoy a relaxing spa day at Ribby Hall.

She has worked incredibly hard on her recovery, and this experience is a wonderful way to celebrate her achievements and enjoy something just for herself.

“There are plenty more wishes still to come, and I'm excited to see what 2026 has in store. It's been brilliant to see the smiles and confidence these moments bring.”

Woodbury View crowned National Winners at the Great British Care Awards

by Karen Jones,
Managing Director, Residential

I'm incredibly proud to share that the Woodbury View team was crowned National Winner of 'The Home Care Team Award' at the prestigious Great British Care Awards recently.



After winning the regional award earlier in the year, the team went on to compete against 11 outstanding providers from across the country at the national finals. To come out on top from such strong competition is truly exceptional and a real testament to the team's commitment, compassion and professionalism they bring to their work every single day.

What makes this award so special is what it represents. The Home Care Team Award honours teams who demonstrate open communication, mutual trust, strong morale, and a deep commitment to dignity, privacy and person centred care.

Judges described Woodbury View as "a deeply compassionate and adaptable team who ensure people feel genuinely heard, empowered and happy". They highlighted the way the team supports people through some incredibly



difficult moments with "warmth, empathy, and insight, creating a space where people feel truly understood".

Woodbury View is a small service in Worcester for up to five people, but the impact of the care delivered there is huge. The team shows, day in and day out, that residential care is not just about meeting needs, but about creating a home where people feel safe, respected and supported to live meaningful lives.

Receiving the award on the night were Nicola Driscoll, Acting Area Manager, and Gemma Scott, Acting Registered Manager, who represented the entire team with real pride. But this award belongs to every single team member at Woodbury View who lives our values and goes above and beyond for the people they support.

Shining a light on Beada House

by Beverley Deeming,
Deputy Manager

Here at Beada House we support adults with complex mental health needs in 16 purpose-built, high-quality, self-contained apartments in Bedworth, Warwickshire. With 24/7 on-site support, our team is focused on providing person-centred, recovery-focused care that helps people move on from institutional settings into more independent living.



From celebrating diversity to recognising achievements there is always something happening at Beada House. Here are a couple of our recent highlights.

Celebrating diversity with a special cultural day

The special cultural day we recently hosted at Beada House couldn't have gone any better! It was a celebration that truly reflected the diversity, warmth and community spirit of the people we support.

Together with two of the people we support, Sara and Addison, we co-produced the event to create a space where everyone could share their unique backgrounds, faiths and experiences. We held the celebration at Bedworth Methodist Church, bringing together residents, team members, friends and local commissioners for a vibrant and inclusive day.

We were also honoured to welcome the first-ever Gurkha Mayor of Nuneaton and Bedworth, Bhim Saru, who joined us in recognising and celebrating the rich diversity within our community.

At Beada House, we support people from around the world, including India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Poland, with a wide range of faiths and cultural backgrounds. I felt it was important to bring everyone together to share their stories so we could better understand and appreciate one another. Lifeways has been

incredibly supportive throughout, and I've had encouragement from colleagues across the organisation to make this vision a reality.

Sara and Addison put their hearts and souls into planning the day. Seeing this truly co-produced event come to life was a fantastic moment, not just for us as a team, but for everyone who took part.

The Mayor kindly led introductions, with each person sharing something about their background. We also enjoyed interactive activities, including matching flags to countries and taking part in quizzes, which sparked plenty of conversation and laughter.

What meant the most to me, though, was seeing the confidence it inspired. Some of the people we support don't usually speak up in group settings, but on the day, they found their voices, shared their experiences and fully embraced the celebration. Watching them grow in confidence and enjoy themselves so openly was genuinely wonderful.

For me, this cultural day wasn't just a one-off event. It was a powerful reminder of what can happen when we create the space for people to be seen, heard and celebrated.

Service Manager Lisa shortlisted for major award

We're absolutely thrilled that one of our own was recently shortlisted for a Lifetime Learning Award!

Lisa Garrard, Beada House's Service Manager, was nominated in the Adult Social Care Apprentice

of the Year category. She was put forward by our Area Manager, David Reynolds, following a research paper she completed as part of her Level 5 Leadership in Health & Social Care NVQ. The paper focused on alcohol abuse and different recovery methods, developed while working closely with a range of NHS recovery teams.

Considered a huge success, not only was the research well-received, it's also had a real impact in practice – since being shared across multiple areas, feeding into wider NHS research and helping to genuinely improve outcomes for the people we support.

As someone who works closely with Lisa, I see firsthand how inspirational she is. She has a vibrant, positive energy that lifts the whole team, and she's always encouraging others to grow, learn and believe in themselves.

Mark Spraggs, Managing Director of Lifeways' Mental Health division, shared: "Everyone at Lifeways is very proud of Lisa. She's someone who continually makes a real difference to our organisation and beyond this well-deserved recognition, she is a driving force in bringing the voice of the people we support into how we run our service. I can't wait to see what Lisa does in the future."

This nomination feels like well-deserved recognition for someone who continually goes above and beyond every day, not just for Beada House, but for Lifeways as a whole.

Worcestershire walk and talk group makes an instant impact!

by Craig Taylor, Area Manager

We're so proud of the impact our Worcestershire walk and talk group is having for the people we support.

We launched the group in January 2025 with help from our fantastic local service managers, and we're now thrilled to have reached our one-year anniversary. Held on the first Monday of



every month, it brings together colleagues and the people we support from five local supported living services. What started as a simple idea has grown into something that genuinely boosts confidence, improves mental health and helps people form lasting friendships.

From the outset, the aim was to create a relaxed, welcoming environment where people could engage with their local community while enhancing their wellbeing and I truly feel we've achieved that.

Our November event, which saw around 30 participants come together at Worcester Racecourse for a wheelchair-accessible walk along the River Severn, was a perfect example. It's been fantastic to see so many of the people we support getting involved.

One of the best things about Lifeways is the freedom to shape local initiatives. The encouragement we've received has allowed this group to grow into something truly shaped by the people who attend and driven by what matters to them.



Sarah Eastwood, Service Manager at our Stourside supported living service in Stourport-on-Severn, has seen the difference first-hand. She shared: "One gentleman in our care has always struggled with anxiety when accessing the community, but he's always one of the first by the door and ready to join the group because he feels it's a safe and supportive environment."

She also referenced the friendships forming across services. "Another person we support at Stourside has sometimes struggled with making friends, but this walk and talk group has given him the space to form close friendships with others, and he keeps in touch with them regularly." Jessie, who lives at our Stourside service, shared her thoughts: "I think it's a fantastic way of getting everyone together and sharing new experiences together."

For me, that's what this is all about - building connections, confidence and community. Looking ahead, we're excited to build on this momentum. We're planning to invite families, social workers and other local stakeholders to join future sessions, strengthening community links even further.

We're also exploring the idea of introducing a spin class at a local gym, tailored specifically for people with learning disabilities, to support both mental and physical wellbeing.

With lots of exciting plans for the year ahead, and the people we support eager to see what's next, the Worcestershire walk and talk group is set to continue going from strength to strength.

Celebrating great results at Delrose and Exeter services!

by Cherianne Howe, Head of Regulation and Governance

I'm delighted to share some positive inspection results from two of our services, both of which have been rated overall 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), with inspectors recognising elements of 'Outstanding' practice.

These results reflect the dedication, compassion and professionalism of our teams, and their commitment to supporting people to live safe, fulfilling and independent lives.



Delrose celebrates major turnaround

Seeing the progress made at our Delrose residential care home in Southampton – moving from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good' across the board – is an exceptional achievement and should not be underestimated.

From a governance and regulation perspective, the changes have been clear and meaningful. Safeguarding processes were strengthened, risk management and care became more holistic and person-centred, and leadership at the service level created a culture where people felt supported to make improvements and ask for help when needed. Staffing stability, training and clearer oversight all played a crucial role.

Family members were full of praise for the Delrose team, according to inspectors, with one quoted in the report as saying: "The new manager has transformed the service. Over the past year we have seen a significant improvement and feel our relative is not only safe but happy."

This is a great moment for the Delrose team, who have worked incredibly hard for this result.



Exeter retains 'Good' with outstanding elements recognised

I'm also pleased that our supported living service in Exeter, which supports 10 people with learning disabilities and mental health needs to live independently in their own homes, has retained its overall 'Good' rating following its latest CQC inspection.

Inspectors once again recognised elements of outstanding practice, particularly in how the service monitors outcomes and maintains strong governance. The team demonstrated high standards across the key areas assessed by the CQC, including safeguarding, risk management, staffing, person-centred support and proactive health care.

The report illustrated that families of people supported there are delighted with the service, with one family member telling inspectors: "The staff are fantastic, they humble us. They understand her every nuance. Staff would know if she is distressed and I love how calm she is."

For me, this result really highlights the consistency and commitment of the Exeter team. Their focus on quality and continuous improvement ensures people receive the right support to live safe, meaningful and independent lives in their community.

I'm so proud of the colleagues and leaders at both services. These inspections show what's possible when strong leadership, skilled teams and a culture of learning come together to deliver high-quality care for the people we support.



Current vacancies in the South West



Supported Living for 28 people

Oak House

Birmingham, West Midlands

Purpose-built apartments

- ✓ Learning disabilities
- ✓ Autism
- ✓ Physical disabilities
- ✓ Mental health

Oak House is a modern and beautifully finished property with twenty-eight one-bedroom apartments, arranged over three floors. Each apartment has a large open-plan kitchen, lounge and dining room, and a wet room style bathroom. The property has a communal lounge and an accessible garden with a patio for people to socialise.

The Oak House apartments would be well suited to people aged between 18 and 65. As there are a lot of shared spaces, a calm, sociable and active person would be very happy here.

The local area offers welcoming cafes, pubs, shops, a post office and high-street banks. There is also year-round access to Perry Common Library, and Kingstanding Wellbeing Centre for swimming and other fitness activities. People also enjoy going to the coast, Sutton Park Donkey Sanctuary, paintball, bingo, and trips to the local pubs.



Supported Living for 16 people

Moor House

Hereford, Herefordshire

Purpose-built apartments

- ✓ Mental health specialism
- ✓ Beautiful period building
- ✓ Virtual tour available

Moor House is a development of 16 self-contained and spacious apartments in a beautiful period building in Hereford, providing accommodation and 24-hour support for people with complex mental health needs.

Set within the quiet location of Widemarsh Common, Moor House is a 15 minute stroll from Hereford Town Centre where there are shops, cafés, restaurants an art college and a retail park. The Courtyard, Herefordshire's Cultural Creative Hub Theatre, Cinema and Gallery is a short walk and offers a creative space for the whole community to share.

There is a local gym and football pitches just a 2-minute walk away offering various training sessions and clubs. There is also an excellent cycle route nearby. There are bus stops across the common and Hereford train station is within easy reach with direct services into Birmingham New Street station.



Residential Care for 16 people

Thorne House

Yeovil, Somerset

Purpose-built apartments

- ✓ Mental health specialism

Dukes House is a welcoming, supportive and stimulating residential service for people with complex care needs. The property has eight en-suite bedrooms, a kitchen, dining room, lounge area, laundry room, a quiet room and a shared bathroom with a hydrotherapy bath.

Life at Dukes House is suitable for people with complex needs including brain injuries, learning disabilities, mental health conditions, non-complex physical disabilities and autism. The people we currently support at Dukes House are aged between 29 and 63, and live with autism, learning disabilities and challenges with communication.

They enjoy a variety of interests including walking, swimming, cycling, computers, rug making and beading, listening to music, baking, watching television, sports and visiting family. The property also has a large, accessible garden with a patio area, a sensory room, a family visiting room, and a training kitchen to support people with learning cooking skills.

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