



A Year of Celebration | 2025
2026



Welcome from Andrea Kinkade, Chief Executive

Welcome to our Annual Review of 2025/26, 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 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 live 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. It has been a year full of joy as we have hosted parties, granted wishes and retold the wonderful stories of the people we support. It's been so uplifting.

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 herein 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 to do 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 pages that follow feature 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.



Welcome from Mark Beadle, Group Chairman

Mark Beadle is the Chairman of Lifeways and Happy Days Nurseries. He is also an Ambassador for both 'Championing Social Care' and 'Adopt A Grandparent'.

Mark has worked in healthcare since 2003 and previously in leisure and media. He was Chief Executive Officer of Capio Nightingale - owner of London's only independent acute psychiatric hospital – the Chief Operating Officer of the Priory Group, Managing Director of Mental Healthcare Services for General Healthcare Group and Managing Director of ACH (now part of Achieve Together).

Mark was also Chair of Lighthouse (now part of Elysium) and Springfield Healthcare Group (now part of Care UK & Welltower).

Mark is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and was the Finance Director of several listed and private companies in the leisure and media sectors before moving into general management in healthcare.

In her foreword, Andrea reflects on how the investment and transformation programmes we set in motion have become firmly embedded across Lifeways. From a Board perspective, 2025/26 has been about ensuring that this transformation is sustained, well governed, and consistently focused on what matters most: improving quality of life for the people we support.

Over the past year, the Board has remained clear in its purpose. Investment - whether in our homes, our people, our systems or our governance - must translate into safe, high-quality support that enables people with complex needs to live fuller, more independent lives. Growth and scale are important, but only where they strengthen stability, consistency and outcomes.

Strong governance underpins this ambition. During the year, we have continued to enhance oversight, assurance and risk management, ensuring that decisions are grounded in evidence and aligned with our values. This discipline allows Lifeways to operate at scale while maintaining a relentless focus on quality, learning and continuous improvement.

The real test of this approach is felt not at Board level, but in everyday experiences: safer and more personalised homes, better supported and more skilled colleagues, improving inspection outcomes, and support that is genuinely built around each individual's goals and aspirations. These are the practical outcomes of responsible investment and effective governance - and they are central to how the Board measures success.



As this Review demonstrates, Lifeways enters the coming year on solid foundations. We are better equipped to navigate a demanding external environment while remaining ambitious for the people we support and the colleagues who deliver care every day. I want to thank our teams, our partners, commissioners and families for their continued trust and commitment.

Above all, I thank the people we support. Their lives, progress and ambitions remain the reason we invest with purpose, govern with integrity, and continue striving to deliver the very best support possible. It is a privilege to chair Lifeways at this stage of its journey.

About Lifeways

Lifeways is the UK's largest team of supported living professionals supporting more than 4,000 people, many with complex needs.

We provide a range of expert services across three divisions: supported living, residential and mental health and we support people with learning disabilities, autism, acquired brain injuries, physical disabilities and mental health challenges.

At Lifeways, people are always at the heart of everything we do. We design services that help people lead independent, fulfilling and happy lives.

We're proud of our track record of extraordinary support and celebrate the positivity, individuality, and ambition of every person.



Purpose, mission & values

Our purpose is to challenge perceptions and achieve the possible.

Fuelling this journey are two strategic objectives – to be the Provider of Choice and the Employer of Choice in our sector.



4,000+ people supported
13,410,000+ hours of support delivered
359 new people commenced support with us

Our values guide and are embedded in everything we do.

Our aspiration is to be the provider and employer of choice in our sector. To help remind us of this, our values, the core principles and beliefs that define us, our culture and our behaviours, spell out that word: **CHOICE**.

C **Caring:**
We're compassionate and always act with kindness.

H **Honest:**
We speak and act with integrity and respect.

O **One team:**
We collaborate and are united in achieving our goals.

I **Innovative:**
We adapt and find new ways to be effective.

C **Courageous:**
We take accountability and do the right thing.

E **Equal:**
We include everyone, valuing diversity and equality.

The values that inspire us



Garden Party at Heron Court



Lifeways' 30th Party at Croft House



Party cupcakes
Cornmill House



Celebrations at Peterborough

Keith with his Lifeways
30 wish driving a racecar



Celebrating 30 years of Lifeways with wishes

In 2025, Lifeways celebrated its 30th Anniversary, reflecting upon our journey from supporting 20 people in 1995 to becoming the UK's largest provider of supported living.

It was a time to celebrate the achievements of people we support, look back on our learning across those years and set out our plans for a bright future. As part of our celebrations, we launched a '30 Wishes' campaign, where team members could nominate people to have a wish come true. The results were as uplifting as they were diverse, from racing cars to theatre trips. Here we offer just a taste of some of the fun we had supporting people to realise their dreams.



Residents at Cornmill House celebrating their
Breakfast Club for their Lifeways 30 wish



Keith's wheelie great car experience

by Karen Jones, Residential Managing Director

Automobile enthusiast Keith was granted a race car experience and it was a dream come true for him.

He said: "I feel very happy and lucky. It means the world to me." Registered Manager Sheila Fielding nominated Keith. She said: "I am over the moon Keith was granted a wish to go to a car experience. Anyone who knows him will appreciate how much this will mean to him, he absolutely loves cars, and I am sure he will love the experience."



30 wishes at Barleycombe



30 wishes transforms Barleycombe's summerhouse into vibrant leisure space

by Angela Dodds, Registered Manager

I was absolutely thrilled that Barleycombe was chosen for the 30 Wishes initiative.

Our summerhouse has always been a hub for creativity and used for a variety of activities ranging from movie nights and sensory activities to an ice cream parlour and tuck shop. Following some storm damage last year there was a request to turn it into a proper leisure space. Through 30 Wishes, we were able to make this happen. It's been brilliant to see the space at the heart of activity once again and the people we support enjoying it to the fullest.



Shining brightly on the national stage

By Chris Woodhead, Chief Commercial Officer

We've been so proud to be recognised at a range of prestigious awards this year, not just as an organisation but, more pleasingly, at scheme and individual level. Here are just a few examples of the brilliant people who work so hard to make Lifeways the organisation it is today.

The last year was stellar for Lifeways, as our quality of support, hard work, compassion and innovation all shone brightly on the national stage.

From awards for our rigorous approach to health and safety, to beating some of the nation's biggest brands to win recognition for our approach to transformation, Lifeways has consistently been recognised alongside some of the best in our sector and beyond.

But while it is hugely satisfying to win national recognition for a job well done, our award haul is really a reflection of the dedication of thousands of team members across Lifeways who bring care, safety, innovation and professionalism to the lives of the people we support. We're immensely proud, and more committed than ever to raising the bar.



Record number shortlisted for awards

by Gareth Roberts, Chief Quality Officer

I couldn't be prouder to share that, this year, Lifeways achieved something truly special - a record-breaking 30 teams and individuals were shortlisted for the Great British Care Awards! Even better, teams from the North East, South East, and North West went on to win their regional heats.



These awards celebrate the incredible people who make social care what it is - those who go above and beyond every day with compassion and dedication. Seeing our colleagues recognised for home care, frontline leadership, and positive behaviour support reminds me why Lifeways is such a special place to work.



To have so many of our teams in the spotlight is a testament to their hard work and commitment to helping people live fulfilling, independent lives.



Kelly & Isobel won the Workforce Development category, and Sophie won the Co-Production category at the Regional Great British Care Awards



Lifeways leader wins tech award

by Amanda Brooke, Chief Transformation Officer

I'm still pinching myself! Winning the Women in Tech Award at the 2025

Women Achieving Greatness in Social Care (WAGS) Awards is such an honour. These awards celebrate women who lead and innovate in social care, and to be recognised for Lifeways' digital and transformation journey means so much to me.



But this isn't just my achievement - it's a reflection of the incredible team effort behind every project we've delivered. I'm deeply grateful to everyone who supported and believed in this journey.

I was also thrilled to see three amazing Lifeways colleagues shortlisted: Karen Roberts for Lifetime Achievement, and Amber Kingsnorth and Caroline Lynch for Social Care Superwoman.

Their recognition shows the passion and talent we have across Lifeways. Together, we're driving real change - and this award is proof that we're making a difference.



Amanda Brooke winning the Women in Tech Award



Heather Wright with the Woman of the Year at the Safety and Health Excellence (SHE) Awards



Woman of the Year - what an honour!

by Heather Wright, Head of Health and Safety

Being named Woman of the Year at the Safety and Health

Excellence (SHE) Awards was a total surprise - but what an incredible feeling.

For me, this award isn't just about personal recognition, it's about how Lifeways teams have supported our approach and collaborated with us to make health and safety a priority. I'm proud of what we've accomplished together - simplifying safety so it's easy to understand, making real improvements in risk management, and always putting people first. That approach has led to seismic improvements across Lifeways, and it's something we can all celebrate.

This award belongs to every team member who plays a part in keeping people safe. Thank you for making Lifeways a better, safer place for everyone.



Our People Team, led by James Westwood-Beere, with the Personnel Today Award



Celebrating transformation success

by Theresa Hyde, Head of HR

This year has been one of the proudest moments of my career! Our People Team won

the Personnel Today Award for Change Management - a huge achievement and recognition of one of the most ambitious transformation programmes in social care.



When we started this journey in 2022, we knew we would face many challenges. But thanks to the dedication of our team, we've delivered incredible results:

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Fewer agency staff, better retention, and a vacancy rate well below the sector average. We've seen induction retention rise by 50% and a 20-point boost in how colleagues view leadership.

What makes me happiest is the cultural shift we've created - empowering frontline teams as decision-makers and ensuring corporate functions enable, rather than hinder. Guided by our CHOICE values, we've built a stronger, more supportive Lifeways. And the best part? We're just getting started - phase two is already underway!

We were nominated for 68 awards this year and won 10, plus 6 high commendations.

Care Home Awards:

- Best for Use of Care Management Software Winner
- Best for Nursing Care - Abbeymoor Highly commended
- Best for Specialist Care Highly commended
- Best for Facilities Management Highly commended

The Safety and Health Awards:

- Woman of the Year Award - Heather Wright Winner
- Best use of Health & Safety Data to lower incident rates Highly Commended

Women Achieving Greatness in Social Care Awards:

- The Woman in Tech Award - Amanda Brooke Winner

Princess Royal Training Award: Winner

Housing with Care Awards:

- Workplace Development Award - Julie O'Donovan - Highly Commended
- Personnel Today Change Management Award - Winner
- British Safety Council - International Safety Award - Merit

Great British Care Awards

- Regional Winners - Care Team Award - Woodbury View
- Co-production Award - Sophie Sayer
- Workforce Development Award - Kelly Stretch & Isable Cockerham
- Frontline Leader Award - Sarah Serrago
- National Final Winners: Care team award - Woodbury View



Woodberry View winning National Winner of 'The Home Care Team Award' at the prestigious Great British Care Awards



Why quality remains the beating heart of Lifeways

by Gareth Roberts, Chief Quality Officer

While 2025/26 may have been transformative for Lifeways, what has remained constant is our unwavering commitment to quality.

Quality is at the forefront of everything we do at Lifeways. It drives every decision, every improvement and every interaction with the people we support, their families and our team members. Over the past year, we've continued to build on that foundation using innovation, insight and compassion to deliver even higher standards of care and support.

Enhancing safeguarding

I'm proud to say that we've enhanced our safeguarding and oversight through better use of technology, ensuring we can identify, understand and respond to issues more quickly than ever before. This included completing the roll-out of e-care software, Nourish, to all frontline team members to record and review daily support, giving managers real-time oversight and helping to ensure care is consistent, personalised and safe.

Investing in inspection

We've also seen remarkable progress across our services with more moving towards higher CQC ratings, and several achieving significant turnarounds in quality and consistency. In 2025, our regulatory compliance rose to 92.5%, inclusive of our Fulcrum third-party reviews.



These independent reviews play an important role in our commitment to continuous improvement, providing additional assurance and constructive challenge alongside statutory regulation.

One of these reviews included the first-ever CQC-style Fulcrum inspection of our Worcester registration, which found the registration to be outstanding across four of the five key areas: Safe, Effective, Caring and Well-Led. The inspection highlighted our person-centred support, compassion and strong governance with our compliance

processes described as 'best in class.' This was followed by a CQC inspection within another registration in Nottingham in January 2026 with 'Outstanding' awarded in the well-led category. This reflects the strength of our operational governance and the expertise of our Registered Managers, whose knowledge and commitment help set and sustain high standards across our services.

Alongside this focus on quality and governance we have seen improvements in workforce stability. Frontline team member retention has increased, which means individuals receive support from people they know and trust.

Constant co-production

Co-production remains central to how we work. We continue to recruit people we support to scrutinise our services and environments and deliver improvements.

We've also added another layer of independent scrutiny through the creation of the Family Advisory Panel, enabling family members to help us build on what we do well, identify where we can improve and continue to raise standards, from communication to the efficiency of our services.

You've already read about our 30th anniversary celebrations, where we extended our commitment to co-production through a pledge to make wishes come true for 30 people we support.

Linked to individual goals, outcomes and life milestones, the initiative was an example of genuine co-production, people working together to make great things happen - whether that was a memorable experience, a special event, a meal or an opportunity to learn new skills. I'm thrilled that we have carried this forward into 2026.

That sense of pride and purpose shines through in all the stories you'll read in this report.



We know there's always more to do but every step forward brings us closer to our goal: to be recognised as the provider of choice for people with complex needs, known for quality, compassion and truly life-changing support.



Quality in action

Investing in Inspection Worcester registration rated 'Outstanding' in independent inspection.

by Craig Taylor, Area Manager

Earlier this year, our Worcester registration took part in a CQC-style inspection carried out by the award-winning independent healthcare consultancy Fulcrum.

We've been working with Fulcrum to independently assess schemes that our regulators have not had the resources to attend for some time. It's our way of being true to our values: inviting extra scrutiny to deliver excellence.

When reading the report, what struck me most was how clearly the inspection reflected the culture within the registration. Inspectors spoke about the team's compassion, professionalism and deep understanding of the people they support, and the way support is tailored to help people live independently and with dignity.



The review also recognised the strength of leadership and learning culture within the service, alongside the progress we've made in strengthening governance and oversight.



Our compliance processes were described as 'best in class', which was particularly meaningful given the focus we've placed on improving consistency and accountability across Lifeways.

So, although this was not a statutory inspection, it gave us really valuable insight and reassurance. The process gives us insight for when the CQC come to inspect us. Most importantly, for me, it recognised the commitment of the Worcester team and the quality of support they deliver every day.



Almost 1000 people we support survey responses captured



Nearly 6000 Governance Audits completed



100% compliance across all Scottish registrations



98% contract compliance



21.9% reduction in interventions in line with the national Restraint Reduction Network (RRN)



92.5% regulatory compliance (including third party inspections)

The inspection also noted the successful integration of Nourish, Deputy, Radar eCompliance, and Power BI dashboards which provide real-time insight into quality, performance, and risk, ensuring strong oversight and enabling teams to deliver responsive, evidence-based support.



Evolving co-production: How people and families shape our delivery

by Jodie Cawley-Allen, Head of Quality

This year, our commitment to quality has been strengthened not only by the work we do, but by the people who help shape it as we have evolved our partnership with the people we support and families. At Lifeways, co-production has always been the foundation of how we design, review, and improve the support we provide. Real progress happens when the people who rely on our support, and the families who advocate alongside them, play an active role in the decisions that affect their lives.

The stories that follow highlight two powerful examples of this in action. Jessie, who we support, chairs our Lifeways Executive Advisory Panel (LEAP) and is also one of our dedicated Quality Checkers. This year she stepped onto a national stage to champion the importance of people with lived experience leading meaningful change.

Alongside this, Tanya Farley, the inaugural Chair of our new Family Advisory Panel, is helping to ensure the voices of our families and carers are heard. Through open conversation, shared learning and honest feedback, she is helping families play a more active role in shaping quality across Lifeways.

Together, Jessie and Tanya show what quality looks like when it is shaped inclusively, rooted in lived experience, strengthened through partnership, and focused on making things better for everyone.



Stepping up for families: Lifeways' first Family Advisory Panel

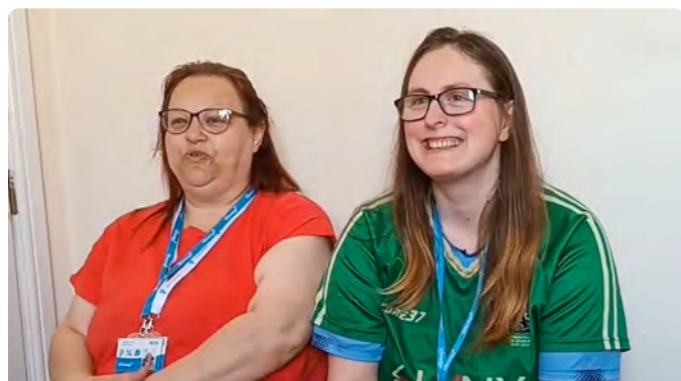
by Tanya Farley, Chair of Lifeways Family Advisory Panel

When I was asked to become Chair of Lifeways' new Family Advisory Panel, I was surprised but I knew I had to step up. As a mum of four and the parent of James, who receives supported living care in Stockport, I've spent years navigating health and care systems. I've seen what works and what doesn't, and I'm passionate about making things better.

I first got involved after reaching out to Lifeways' Chief Executive on LinkedIn. We had an honest conversation about my son's story and my hopes for improving supported living. That led to the creation of this independent panel - a group designed to give families a stronger voice and help shape the quality of care across Lifeways.

“For me, it's about sharing lived experience, identifying best practice, and making sure families feel heard. I'd love to see families visiting other services and giving feedback, because that shared perspective can raise standards everywhere.”

I wasn't expecting the title of Chair, but if you've got something valuable to offer, why hold back? My goal is simple: open communication, honest feedback, and continuous improvement. If something isn't working, people need to feel safe enough to say so. That's how we make things better for everyone.



Caroline and Vicky - members of our LEAP panel



From nervous to proud: How I'm helping shape the future of care

by Jessie, a person we support and LEAP Chair

When I was asked to speak at ARC England's national event about co-production, I'll admit I was nervous. But I'm so proud I did it. I got to share how, as a Lifeways Quality Checker and member of the Lifeways Executive Advisory Panel (LEAP), I help make services better for people like me.

“Speaking at ARC England showed me how powerful co-production can be. Putting people at the heart of decision-making makes a real difference in people's lives and I'm so proud to be part of that.”

“I'm passionate about this work because it gives us a voice. We're not just being listened to, we're driving change. I believe Lifeways has great Quality Checkers, and we can help others too.”

“We showed a video and explained how we identify issues, suggest solutions, and make real changes happen. It felt amazing to show everyone what co-production looks like when people supported by Lifeways are at the heart of it.”

“One idea that really excited me was cross-organisation quality checking - where people supported by one provider help review and improve services at another. I think that's a brilliant way to share learning and raise standards everywhere.”

Inspirational Jessie hits the airwaves with podcast to champion inclusivity

by Sarah Eastwood, Service Manager

At our Stourport service, we're so proud of Jessie who launched her Let's Collaborate podcast in 2025, aimed at raising awareness of what inclusive support really looks like.

Supported by Lifeways and drawing on her lived experience, Jessie has embraced her role as a podcast host and is having honest conversations about accessibility, assistive technology, transport and the everyday challenges and victories of people with disabilities. With backing from members of our leadership team, Jessie is bringing real voices to the forefront and building understanding between people we support, team members and families.

Having supported her throughout, I've seen the boost in confidence and pride this project has given her. This podcast is a wonderful example of co-production in action and a powerful reminder that people we support should always have the microphone.





Supported Living: Enabling and empowering extraordinary ordinary lives

by Amy Gilbert, Supported Living Managing Director

One of the things I am most proud of during 2025/26 is the way Lifeways has continued to stand alongside people with the most complex needs – and has done so with both imagination and dependability.

Across the country, we support many people whose lives have been shaped by institutional care: long hospital stays, repeated placement breakdowns, or environments that were designed around risk rather than potential.



For too many people, those settings can become permanent by default, not by choice. At Lifeways, we remain absolutely committed to a different path – one where complexity is not a reason to contain people, but a reason to invest more skill, care and belief.

This year, we have seen powerful examples of what that looks like in practice. People who had spent years in hospital or restrictive settings have moved into homes of their own, supported by highly skilled teams using positive behaviour support, trauma-informed approaches and close multi-disciplinary working. These transitions are never simple. They require patience, clinical confidence, partnership with commissioners and families, and staff who are highly trained and resilient. But when they work – and they have worked repeatedly this year – the impact is profound.

Some of the stories shared in this review reflect those journeys. They show people rebuilding confidence, rediscovering choice, reconnecting with their communities and, in some cases, achievements that once felt out of reach: going out independently, forming relationships, expressing themselves more fully, or simply feeling safe and at home. These are not “quick wins”. They are the result of steady, thoughtful support delivered over time.

What matters just as much as the outcomes is how those outcomes are achieved. As we have grown our reputation for complex support, we have done so in a way that remains grounded and responsible. Creativity at Lifeways is never about cutting corners or taking unmanaged risks. It is about problem-solving together: adapting environments,

building the right teams, listening closely to the person and those who know them best, and being honest about what good support really requires. That balance – between ambition and realism – is fundamental to who we are.

Confidence, choice, communities

Supporting people to build their confidence and independence and engage with their communities has been a key focus throughout the year. Just one example of this has been our regional football tournaments, where teams have come together to create opportunities for the people we support to meet up and have fun! For some, this has sparked an interest in trying new sports, joining local clubs or even exploring the possibility of setting up their own clubs with the assistance of their support teams, where opportunities do not already exist locally.

Looking ahead, our aspirations are clear. We want Lifeways to be recognised nationally as a provider that commissioners can rely on when situations are complex, fragile or high-risk – not just because we can step in, but because we stay. We will continue to invest in specialist capability, in leadership at service level, and work to deliver housing solutions that make genuine community living possible. And we will keep learning: using data, reflection and lived experience to strengthen how we support people with the most complex needs.

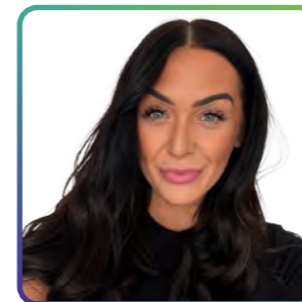
Most importantly, we will keep holding on to a simple principle: that everyone, no matter how complex their needs, deserves a life with dignity, opportunity and a sense of home.



Helping to make that possible is demanding work, and it is work we do with care, humility and pride. It is also work that defines Lifeways – a provider that is imaginative in its thinking, consistent in its delivery, and steadfast in its commitment to the people we support.



63 people with complex needs moved to independence



Ruth's journey to a happier, healthier life

by Kaitlan Davey, Team Leader

Over the past year, I've had the pleasure of supporting Ruth at our Jersey Gardens supported living service in Mansfield.

Ruth's journey began a few years ago when she wanted to become more active without constantly feeling out of breath. Through healthier eating and calorie counting, she lost an incredible three stone, reducing her weight from 18 to 15 stone. Wanting to build on this progress, she joined Slimming World last year and committed to attending weekly sessions.

It's been great to support Ruth along the way. We've shared tips and spent time preparing meals together, with Slimming World hot pot becoming a firm favourite. Her determination has been inspiring, and she has since lost another three stone. But the changes in Ruth go far beyond weight loss. She has truly blossomed, is

happier, more confident, and loves to go shopping for new clothes, especially bright, colourful outfits. She's also much more active and now goes out walking regularly.

Ruth has taken real ownership of her journey and these days, she even keeps me on track with what I should and shouldn't be eating! With continued support from the team, she maintains a healthy balance and an active social life. We couldn't be prouder of Ruth. Her journey is a testament to what's possible with the right support, a positive mindset, and a whole lot of determination!



Trevor's transformation: building a home, skills and a voice

by Melonie Duffin, Service Manager

The greatest thing about my job is watching someone grow and transform after they've joined us. When 18-year-old

Trevor moved into his own flat in Trafford, after months in temporary accommodation, it marked the start of an important journey and it has been a privilege to watch his confidence soar.

For the first time, he had a stable home and the chance to truly make it his own. With support, Trevor furnished his flat, gradually transforming the space into something welcoming and comfortable.

He has also started cooking, woodworking, and exploring creative interests like comedy, music and performance. He's made new friends nearby, discovered talents he never knew he had and has now joined the Lifeways Quality Checkers team - helping shape support for others. With support, Trevor's found independence, confidence and a real voice. Reflecting on his future, Trevor shared: "Eventually I'd really like a family and a job – but I also know this may take time." His story shows how with encouragement, stability and opportunity, young people like Trevor can realise potential and hope for the future.





Residential Care: A year of quality, celebrations and achievements

by Karen Jones, Residential Managing Director

As well as being a year of celebration, 2025 has been a year of building on the foundations of quality and leadership established during 2024. From Care Home Open Week celebrations to the introduction of our 30 Wishes initiative, it has been a time of recognising achievement, strengthening governance and most importantly, enabling the people we support to realise their dreams.

Improving quality

We work tirelessly to improve quality, so it is good to see this recognised under inspection. If I include our independent Fulcrum assessments, we are 96.4% compliant in residential care, which is wonderful to see. We now have just a few aged non-compliant rated services that I firmly believe will move to Good when assessed by CQC.

Embedding systems

The rollout of Nourish is complete across our services, ensuring our teams have accurate information and are recording care activity at the point of delivery. The introduction of digital dashboards and enhanced reporting tools enables our operational leadership teams to proactively monitor the performance of our services, recognising strengths, identifying concerns early and ensuring these are responded to and resolved swiftly. The introduction of Tier 4 and 5 dashboards complete our organisational governance, providing oversight from a local service level right through to the Executive Leadership Team and Board. Together, these initiatives are supporting our objectives to be both the provider and employer of choice.

In early June we once again opened our doors and joined in Care Homes Open Week with six homes participating. The people we support, their families and friends, professionals and colleagues came together during the glorious summer

weather to celebrate with garden parties, carnivals, circuses and birthday celebrations. It was a wonderful time. Especially pleasing for me was to see our CHOICE awards winners acknowledged and their achievements recognised, with awards presented during the celebrations. I'm passionate about taking time to recognise the brilliant work our team members give - they are an inspiration.

Our 30 Wishes initiative has created some truly special moments:

Barleycombe's wish came true with a newly funded leisure space replacing their old summer house which had been destroyed by storms.

Gary at Trent View realised his dream of feeding Meerkats alongside a spooktacular Halloween party.

The people at Dukes House now enjoy a colourful sensory music room, creating new opportunities for connection.

Keith from Aspen fulfilled his lifelong dream of a driving experience in a racing car.

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The 30 Wishes initiative is continuing into 2026, and it will be fantastic to see more wishes coming true. It was also wonderful to see Abbeymoor highly commended in the category of Best Specialist Care at the Care Home Awards in May 2025.

Under the leadership of Louise Watson, Registered Manager of Abbeymoor, the service has developed a unique relationship with Northumberland University, supporting third year Occupational Therapy students to gain an immersive learning experience supporting people with neurological conditions.

For 2026, we remain focused on delivering the best possible support and accommodation, developing specialisms, increasing occupancy and strengthening leadership capability to ensure we continue to deliver excellence. I know this will enable more people to live in residential services within communities and enjoy their best lives.



A groundbreaking partnership sets new standard for care training

by Louise Watson, Registered Manager

I'm proud to share how a pioneering partnership at Abbeymoor, our residential Neurological Care Centre in Newcastle, has been hailed as a blueprint for how social and health care can work together to improve lives.

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. Unlike short university placements, this immersive approach allowed the students to become part of the Abbeymoor team, working alongside colleagues every day and gaining a deeper understanding of each residents' needs.



A family approach: How one team's personal care supported Sandra's recovery

by Nicola Driscoll, Service Manager

Woodbury View is a small residential care service in Worcester that supports four people. But it's much more than a care home, it's a family. So, when Sandra, 80, became unwell, we all rallied round to make sure she received the best possible care.

In January 2025, Sandra began experiencing seizure-like symptoms. With no previous diagnosis of epilepsy, we were extremely concerned and she was taken to hospital for further treatment and investigation. The hospital environment proved very distressing for Sandra, who has complex support needs and does not use spoken word as her primary form of communication. Knowing Sandra required reassurance and familiar faces, members of the Woodbury View team made sure to visit every day. We missed Sandra.

Following assessment, Sandra's medical team advised that she would require a lengthy period of rehabilitation in hospital to recover her strength and mobility - but we

The students, Chloe Stockdale and Elicia Bordoley, made a real difference, introducing personalised room layouts, communication boards, and tailored group activities. They also delivered training to the team on the effects of brain injuries and how to better support residents in their daily routines, strengthening our focus on person-centred care. Chloe, who has since qualified as an Occupational Therapist described her experience as a privilege.

“
CABIS is now highlighting this initiative as a model for integrated, proactive care and we are proud to be part of a groundbreaking collaboration that is improving outcomes for the people we support.

Innovation has long been part of Lifeways' DNA, and this partnership reflects our commitment to developing future professionals while enhancing the quality of our care.

To support future placements, our team has developed a structured induction plan, including training and mentoring. Now qualified, Chloe and Elicia are supporting the next group of students, continuing a positive cycle of learning and improvement.



know Sandra and we felt confident we could provide the physical and emotional care and support she needed at home. After discussions with her medical team, we worked closely with hospital staff and community health professionals to bring Sandra home with a tailored recovery plan, including daily physiotherapist visits.

“
Within hours of returning home, Sandra showed remarkable improvement, standing for the first time in days and taking small steps. With continued support she has gone from strength to strength. Gerald, Sandra's brother, shared his thanks saying he never worries as he knows Sandra always receives the best possible care from the team.

I truly believe our family approach made a real difference, and I am so proud to be Service Manager at Woodbury View, knowing that every day we support people to live with dignity, confidence and the care they deserve.



Mental Health: Recovery in action

by Mark Spraggs, Managing Director

This year has been one of meaningful progress, shared achievement, and continual improvement across our mental health services. The people we support continue to make significant strides in their recovery journeys, often in ways that are both inspiring and deeply personal.

Across our services, individuals have been working towards their goals and making tangible progress in their daily lives. A powerful example includes a peer-led stress-management group, initiated by one person and embraced by others within their service and support team. In another case someone who was previously unable to leave their flat, has built confidence through gradual exposure and is now attending groups and art classes and working towards GCSE qualifications.



Some achievements have involved major life changes, such as travelling abroad independently for the first time, with the reassurance that support was only a phone call away. These stories highlight how flexible, person-centred support can evolve in line with each person's recovery.

Experiencing mental ill-health earlier in life does not limit future opportunities. This year, the people we support have achieved academic qualifications in subjects ranging from media studies to law and criminology. Others have taken up paid or voluntary roles in food banks, befriending services, and care settings. Many have also embraced new hobbies from DJ-ing to creative art, each representing an important expression of identity and confidence.



Emma's story: Rebuilding a life, one day at a time

by Ian Billows, Service Manager

Emma has been part of the Lifeways community for many years, and I have been privileged to watch her inspiring story of resilience, personal growth and achievement.

Her journey has not always been easy. In the face of significant challenges Emma has shown extraordinary courage in rebuilding her life and taking positive steps towards her goals.

Building herself back up

In 2010, after a crisis and bravely deciding not to take her own life, Emma fell and sustained a serious injury that left her in a wheelchair with no feeling from the waist down. After spending time in several hospitals and a residential care home, she eventually found her new home here at Cobblestone Court and began rebuilding not only her confidence, but her life.

When Emma first arrived at the service, she was at a really low point. Life had taught her to protect herself, and she was understandably guarded. Trust did not come easily. But with time, consistency and the right support from our team, she began to open up. Today, if something matters to Emma, she speaks up proudly.

I remember the moment things began to shift. Emma described it as "a lightbulb moment," when she realised: "I can't change my injury, but I can change everything else around me."

From that point, Emma found the determination she needed to start transforming her life. She reconnected with her faith, began working with personal trainers at the gym, building up incredible upper body strength. She also started working on strengthening her legs and relearning how to walk.

Unlocking her potential

One of Emma's biggest achievements has been her commitment to learning. She has thrown herself into personal development and completed a range of courses, including mental health and wellbeing qualifications, counselling-related training, first aid and a variety of personal development certificates.



She loves showing her certificates to the team and is genuinely proud of the knowledge she has gained. After leaving school without qualifications, she has now earned 18 certificates and has come to realise that her ADHD doesn't mean she isn't capable, but rather that her brain simply works differently. As Emma says, "You just have to learn how to work with it, not against it."

Looking to the future, Emma's next goal is to go to university, where she hopes to train to become a primary school teacher. She has already begun gaining experience by mentoring a young child with autism and working as a teaching assistant.

Road to independence

It is Emma's confidence, positive attitude and determination that have led her to start thinking about moving out of supported living and living independently.



While her achievements are entirely down to her resolve, I am incredibly proud of the role the team at Cobblestone Court has played in supporting her. They have encouraged her to persevere even on difficult days, offered patience and consistency and most importantly continued to believe in her.



Our continuing transformation: Delivering change that sticks

by Amanda Brooke, Chief Transformation Officer

It's often said that transformation is hard - and the stats back it up with up to 70% of efforts failing. They falter due to unclear priorities, cultural resistance, or costly consultant-led programmes that never quite deliver on their promise. At Lifeways, we've shown it doesn't have to be that way.

Over the past two years, we've completed Phase One of a bold, organisation-wide transformation - without expensive consultants, supported by incredible operational and support teams. As our Chairman said: "What we've achieved is not just rare - it's remarkable."



We started with purpose, not technology. We co-produced our Purpose, Vision, Mission, and Values with our people, then built a roadmap rooted in the needs of our services and the people we support. What was scoped as a three-year plan, we delivered in two.

The results speak volumes: quality compliance rose from 77% to 91.9% (inclusive of fulcrum inspections), staff retention jumped from 60% to 72%, employee engagement increased from 59% to 73% and agency usage fell from 9.3% to 2.4%.

Why did it work? Clear vision, aligned leadership, ruthless prioritisation, and a culture of continuous improvement. We've built a scalable, secure backbone for growth - and we did it while delivering high-quality care every day.

Phase Two is next: growth, innovation, and deeper use of data. Transformation isn't a destination - it's a mindset. And we're just getting started.



Digital & technology: Empowering Lifeways through intelligent transformation

by Andy Ferrington, Chief Information Officer

We have fundamentally transformed how care is delivered and managed across Lifeways through a comprehensive programme of digital and operational change.



• At the heart of this is the rollout of Nourish e-care across all services -introducing real-time digital care planning accessible on more than 5,400 shared mobile devices. With information available instantly at the point of care, we have significantly reduced medication errors, cut paper usage, and freed up staff time -improving both safety and the quality of support.



• Alongside this, we have modernised workforce management through the implementation of Deputy. Now used by more than 9,000 colleagues, it has simplified rostering, improved visibility of staffing, and reduced reliance on agency provision -delivering £1m of annual savings. These savings have been reinvested directly into colleague pay and property improvements, ensuring the benefits of transformation are felt across our workforce and services.

• We have also rebuilt our technology foundations. A move to a cloud-first architecture, the deployment of over 5,000 devices, and major upgrades to connectivity have enabled more agile, responsive ways of working. At the same time, we have migrated 20TB of data to SharePoint under robust, role-based access

controls -strengthening governance, security and accessibility across the organisation. This transformation is underpinned by a renewed focus on culture and governance. We have introduced new organisational values, enhanced induction and learning and development, and embedded regular engagement surveys to give colleagues a stronger voice. KPI dashboards and a unified data architecture now provide transparency at every level, enabling smarter, faster, and more consistent decision-making.



• Complementing this, the introduction of RADAR has brought together quality management, incident reporting, audits and improvement actions into a single, integrated view. This allows teams to identify risks earlier, maintain consistent standards, and take timely action -reinforcing a culture of continuous improvement and accountability. Together, these changes represent a step-change in how Lifeways operates -combining digital capability, operational discipline and cultural renewal. The result is a more connected, data-driven organisation, delivering safer, higher-quality support and better outcomes for the people we serve.



The journey ahead is exciting! Our next stage of digital innovation will focus further on the use of automation to reduce administrative processes, expanding AI capability, improving digital access for people we support and their families and continuing to strengthen data governance and security.

The past two years have marked a period of significant digital transformation for Lifeways. What began as a programme to modernise our systems has become a powerful driver of quality, efficiency and person-centred support across all our services. Digital tools are now an integral part of how we deliver safe, consistent, high-quality support.

Our digital platforms, which include Nourish, Deputy and RADAR, continue to underpin daily operations.

We have significantly expanded access to digital tools with our IT user base growing from 2,000 to more than 10,000 team members, creating a much more connected workforce with colleagues able to access the information they need quickly and securely.

With our core systems embedded, we now have real-time visibility of safety, staffing, quality, occupancy and outcomes across the organisation. These insights are directly improving our decision making from frontline colleagues to senior leaders, strengthening our ability to deliver safe, high-quality support at scale.

This year we have begun introducing AI powered digital assistants to help colleagues access information such as policies, guidance and procedures more quickly, supporting more efficient working and greater consistency across our services.

Alongside AI assistants for colleagues, we have begun to pilot AI technology to support care planning, including reviewing care plans to identify gaps, highlight inconsistencies and benchmark against best practice frameworks. This provides an additional level of oversight that would be impossible through manual governance alone, further enhancing quality and safety.

Of course, AI does not replace professional judgement, rather it acts as an early warning system, drawing attention to areas that may need review, supporting safer and more consistent care.

With strong foundations in place and an ambitious roadmap, Lifeways is positioned not just to adopt technology but to lead the sector in the intelligent, ethical and person-centred use of digital innovation.



**£1.25M invested
in transformation**



Growth we can be proud of

by Chris Woodhead, Chief Commercial Officer

The 2025/26 year has been one of growth that has felt both purposeful and grounded. Growth that reflects our confidence in who we are, what we stand for, and the impact we deliver.

We don't seek growth for growth's sake, any more than we have scale for scale's sake. Growth and scale, for us, are about improving and deepening the value proposition, for people we employ and support, in a sector where funding is not keeping pace with increasing need.

Two solid years of transformation, integration and consolidation, have given Lifeways stronger operational discipline, clearer governance, and a more consistent quality approach that is enabling us to grow sustainably, with credibility.

Quality comes first

I'm so encouraged by the **quality** of our growth. We have deepened relationships with commissioners, housing partners and system leaders, increasingly being seen not simply as a provider, but as a trusted strategic partner in solving complex challenges.

Something we have worked hard to earn.

This is reflected in the delivery of new services developed in genuine partnership. For example, in Jarrow, we opened a new supported living service in collaboration with South Tyneside Council and Karbon Homes, creating high-quality, bespoke homes for people moving out of more restrictive environments.

What makes schemes like this stand out is not simply the physical development, but the model: co-produced support, strong local relationships, and a drive to enable people to live more independently. The partnership with South Tyneside has been exemplar: shared ambition, shared risk and shared success. **In the very best partnerships we learn together as we go. Brilliant to be part of.**

Across the year we have worked alongside local authorities, NHS partners and housing providers to unlock similar opportunities — supporting people to move on from hospital or institutional settings into homes where they can build independence,

relationships and meaningful lives. Conversations have begun earlier, moved faster, and been shaped more collaboratively than ever before, a clear sign that our model and reputation are gaining traction.

Capacity to deliver where it matters

We have momentum and have a strong pipeline of new developments. We are particularly excited about schemes progressing in Stockport, Southampton, Newcastle, North Tyneside and Glasgow. These partnerships represent the next phase of our growth, extending our reach into new communities, strengthening existing relationships, and continuing to deliver high-quality, bespoke supported living at scale.

Importantly, Lifeways has sharpened its commercial discipline, being more deliberate in where and how we grow, focusing on areas that align with our strategy, capability and values. This has meant making choices but ultimately ensuring that our growth strengthens the organisation rather than stretches it.

Our business development and commercial teams have evolved, with clearer accountability, stronger data insight, and a proactive approach to pipeline development. This has given us greater visibility, improved pace, and a stronger sense of control over our future growth trajectory: from reactive activity towards planned, insight-led growth.

However, it would be wrong to present growth as taking place in isolation from the wider context.



Demand continues to rise, funding remains under pressure, and complexity is increasing across every part of the system. As a result, growth in our sector must always be balanced with responsibility — to the people we support, to our colleagues, and to the partners we work alongside.

In that context, I am particularly proud that quality remains our anchor: growth has not, and will not, come at the expense of standards. Our continued focus on compliance, governance and operational consistency is what gives our commissioners and housing partners the confidence to grow with us.

Taking control: How I designed my own support plan and found my freedom

by Jess, a person we support in Jarrow

In Summer 2025, Lifeways opened a brand new supported living service in Jarrow in partnership with South Tyneside Council and Karbon Homes. Jess was one of the first people to move in and has gone from strength to strength. This is her story:

Moving into Lifeways' new supported living service in Jarrow has been life-changing for me. For the first time in my life, I feel surrounded by people who truly care and are committed to helping me grow and thrive.



Before I moved in, I asked if I could design my own support plan and train the team who would be supporting me. Lifeways said yes and that's exactly what I've done. I've delivered sessions to five frontline team members and an area manager, covering everything from my autism diagnosis and sensory needs to crisis strategies and building trust. Seeing everyone engaged and laughing during training was amazing. It felt like they were really listening to me.



In the past, support plans were written for me, not by me. They didn't always reflect who I am. Now, I understand what person-centred care really means - it's about living a fulfilling life, not just ticking boxes. Since moving here, I feel relief. I can breathe again. I have my own space, my own home, and a team that respects my voice. For the first time in a long time, I can officially say I'm happy.



All in a day's work: onboarding 180 new colleagues and 60 people we support

by Nicola Beasley, Regional Director

We were thrilled to welcome 180 new team members and 60 new people we support as we mobilised services across Rotherham and Tameside earlier this year.

Being selected to take over services is more than a story of growth for Lifeways. It's about creating opportunities for people with complex needs to live their best lives, as independently as possible.

Our new team members officially joined us in April and took part in our new induction and learning programmes to get familiar with Lifeways. They are working across 15 locations - five in Rotherham and 10 in Tameside - and

bring with them invaluable experience and passion. Many already know the people they support, and we are there to make it easy for them to deliver exceptional care.



Every time we're chosen to provide support, it's an honour. We care deeply about quality, and we are working closely with families and partners to ensure these services meet the highest standards. This expansion is part of Lifeways' transformation programme, which has invested over £10m in technology, property, and systems since 2023.

There's always more to do, but moments like this remind me why we do what we do - because every person deserves the chance to thrive.



Working smarter to make the care pound go further.

by Kieron Steele, Chief Financial Officer

We all know that the funding challenges in this sector are huge and enduring. You will have read about how we have been transforming to work smartly and efficiently, to make the care pound go further and deliver impact.

In a system where demand is growing but funding does not keep pace, this focus is not optional. We must ensure that every pound is used effectively, balancing financial discipline with our commitment to high-quality, person-centred care. That means rigor in resource allocation, driving operational efficiency, and ensuring that investment is targeted where it delivers the greatest benefit.

This year, fee uplifts in the face of rising Employers National Insurance Contributions were particularly challenging, yet Lifeways has continued to perform strongly, protecting the support we provide and reinforcing long-term sustainability. The external environment remains complex but the resilience of our underlying business has enabled us to absorb pressures while continuing to invest in our services.

That resilience is the result of deliberate and sustained effort. Across the organisation, we maintain a disciplined approach to cost management, strengthened procurement practices, and improved financial visibility and control. We have worked closely with operational teams to ensure a clear line of sight between financial performance and the quality of support being delivered, recognising that the two are fundamentally linked.

The result has been a year of real momentum and positive change, with our Finance, Property, Procurement and Legal teams collaborating to strengthen our foundations while making a meaningful difference to the people who live and work in our services. This critical integration has brought together commercial insight, contractual discipline, estate strategy, and operational understanding to support better, faster decision-making.

We have continued to navigate and resolve historic challenges, support transformation programmes, and help streamline the estate so that Lifeways' resources are focused where they make the biggest difference. This has included taking a pragmatic approach to our portfolio - investing in environments and services that meet needs,

while addressing those that no longer align with our standards or long-term strategic direction. Alongside this, we have strengthened our financial planning and performance management. By improving forecasting, strengthening governance, and aligning financial and operational metrics more closely, we are building a platform that enables us to respond quickly to emerging pressures while maintaining strategic focus. Looking ahead, we are clear that the sector will continue to face significant funding and cost challenges. However, we are equally confident that the actions we have taken this year have put Lifeways on a stronger footing. Our focus will remain on disciplined execution - driving efficiency, investing wisely, and maintaining the financial strength that allows us to continue supporting people to live fulfilling, independent lives.

Ultimately, our approach is simple: financial sustainability is not an end in itself, but the enabler of everything we do. By continuing to manage our resources carefully and invest thoughtfully, we can ensure that Lifeways remains resilient, responsive, and able to deliver lasting impact for the people we support.

Lean and green...

Our commitment to sustainability has leapt forward, with LED lighting upgrades across our estate, a full switch to 100% renewable electricity, and the integration of energy-efficiency standards into every capital investment programme. These actions not only reduce our environmental impact but also create brighter, safer, and more comfortable spaces for the people we support and our colleagues.

The teams have also embraced smarter, greener ways of working - reducing paper use by 90%, cutting print volumes, and supporting flexible and remote-working models. These changes reflect a growing culture of innovation and sustainability across Lifeways.

I'm thrilled with a year of truly meaningful progress. The dedication, partnership and forward-thinking approach of our teams have helped build a stronger Lifeways - one that is more sustainable, more efficient, and better placed to support the lives of the people who we support.



£8.2M invested in properties

A Fresh Start – the £500,000 transformation of Beeton Grange

by Sakinah McIntosh, Registered Manager at Beeton Grange

When I first walked into Beeton Grange as Registered Manager, I knew the building didn't reflect the care we provide. Built in the 1930s, it was tired, grey, and far from the uplifting environment our residents deserve. So when Lifeways invested £500,000 into a full refurbishment, my team and I were determined to make it personal.

We didn't just change the décor, we gave people choice. Everyone picked the colours for their bedroom and helped shape the communal spaces. Today, the walls are alive with personality: mellow-yellow, peach-pink, coke-bottle red. Anthony, one of our residents, proudly chose baby-blue and ruby-red for his room and even bought his own stylish furniture. "Feels great," he told me. "Now when family visit, I've got somewhere clean and tidy to show them."



The transformation goes beyond aesthetics. People who once stayed in their rooms now spend time in bright, welcoming lounges. Behaviours have improved, confidence is growing, and the garden offers a peaceful space to relax.

As I see smiles return and hear laughter in the corridors, I know this investment wasn't just about bricks and paint - it was about creating a home where recovery feels possible.



Bringing Trent View back to life with £750,000 refurbishment

by Ellen Parton, Registered Manager at Trent View

Prior to the refurbishment at Trent View, I knew the building needed serious attention.

It was tired, worn, and didn't reflect the high-quality care we provide. Thanks to Lifeways' £750,000 investment and the incredible work of our Property Team, that's all changed.

Today, Trent View is a beautiful, welcoming home that still retains its Victorian character. The original tiled entrance floor

has been restored, the roof replaced, and every bedroom fully refurbished. We've added a sensory room, a new medication room, and upgraded lounges and dining spaces. Everything we hoped for has been delivered.



What makes me proud is how involved the people we support have been. They chose colours and furnishings for their rooms, making each space truly personal. Laura, who helped reopen the home, along with everyone else living there, simply couldn't wait to move back in.

I've worked in care for 38 years, and this transformation is one of the best I've seen. Lifeways has invested time, resources, and heart into this project. Now, Trent View isn't just a building - it's a home where people can feel safe, comfortable, and supported to live their best lives.





Power to the people

by James Westwood-Beere, Chief People Officer

The year 2025-26 has been one of enhanced delivery and real consolidation for Lifeways. After two years of building strong foundations, the benefits of our transformation are now clearly being felt by our team members and the people we support. That investment is delivering more engaged teams, stronger operational capability, and increasing organisational stability.

Our ambition to be the sector's Employer of Choice continues to guide every decision, and the progress made reflects the commitment, professionalism and resilience of our people.

Turning investment into impact

This year, Lifeways made significant strides in recruitment, engagement, and learning and development.

A vibrant national recruitment campaign and refreshed careers website attracted new talent, while improvements to induction, mentoring, and onboarding helped new starters settle quickly and feel confident in their roles.

Engagement reached record levels, with high participation in the 'Your Say' survey, and rising Net Promoter Scores, reflecting a workforce that feels heard, valued, and connected.

At the same time, our learning and development programmes delivered measurable impact, with hundreds of courses, leadership and career development opportunities, and clear progression pathways.

These initiatives not only strengthened skills and capability but also gave team members the confidence and tools to thrive, helping them feel empowered, supported, and able to deliver the best care every day.

Last year also saw external recognition of Lifeways' people led transformation. Our work across reward, wellbeing, workforce stability and leadership capability has been recognised through sector awards and external endorsements, from Personnel Today to Princess Royal Awards, reinforcing our position as a leading employer within social care.

Building for the future

This chapter brings together the key people-focused progress made over the last year from strengthening our Employee Value Proposition and culture, to building leadership capability and career pathways, evolving reward and wellbeing, improving HR operations, and delivering the next phase of our Target Operating Model.

Quality and safety remain at the centre of our ambition, supported by stronger operational disciplines and improving compliance oversight.

Looking forward to 2026, our focus will be on building scale, resilience and readiness, embedding the next phase of our Target Operating Model, strengthening leadership capability and succession, enhancing reward flexibility, and preparing for forthcoming employment and regulatory change.

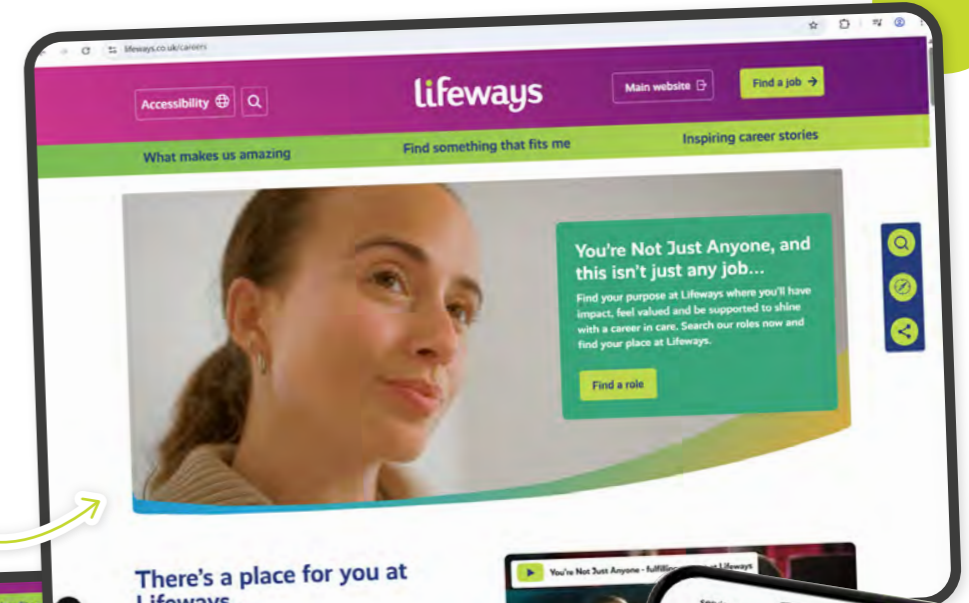
Power to the People celebrates our team members: their impact, their compassion, and their unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional care every day.



Stream is a financial wellbeing app that allows employees to manage their pay more flexibly

Our Careers Hub is designed to attract and engage potential candidates.

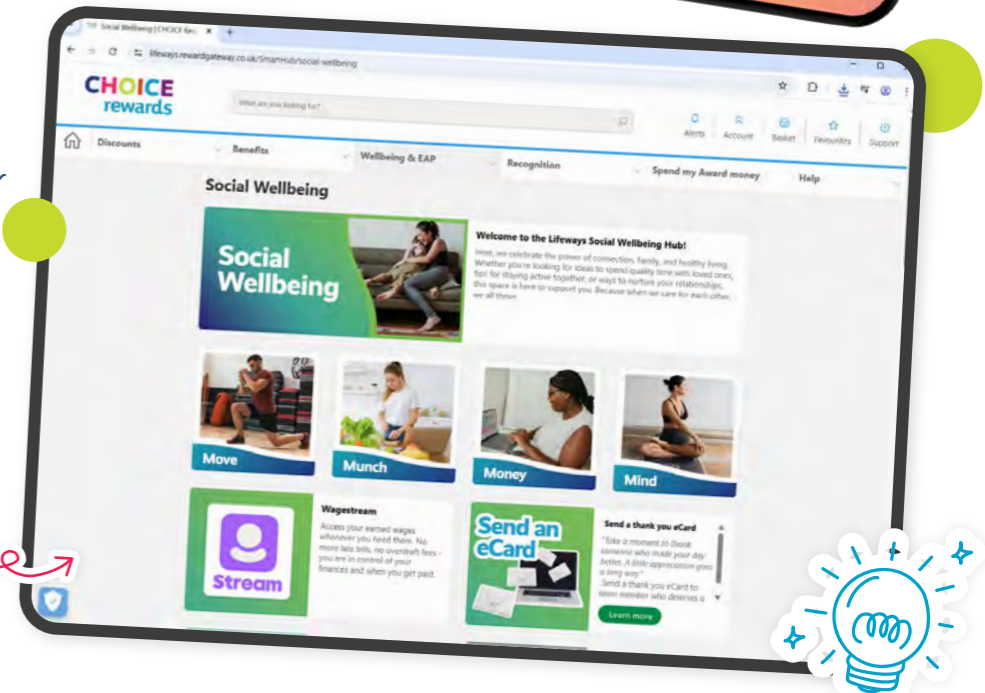
People can learn about Lifeways, explore roles, understand career pathways, and apply for jobs in a simple user-friendly way.



Our Careers Hub

Our CHOICE Rewards Platform is our central hub for employee benefits, recognition and discounts.

Team members can access team perks, savings, wellbeing resources, and receive recognition all in one place.





Growing our capability

by Suzanne Rosenberg, Head of Learning and Talent

Our sector relies upon people with the right values acquiring the skills they need to deliver great support, so developing the capabilities of our workforce remains a strategic priority for Lifeways, as we strive to be the employer of choice.

Getting off to a great start – Improving our induction

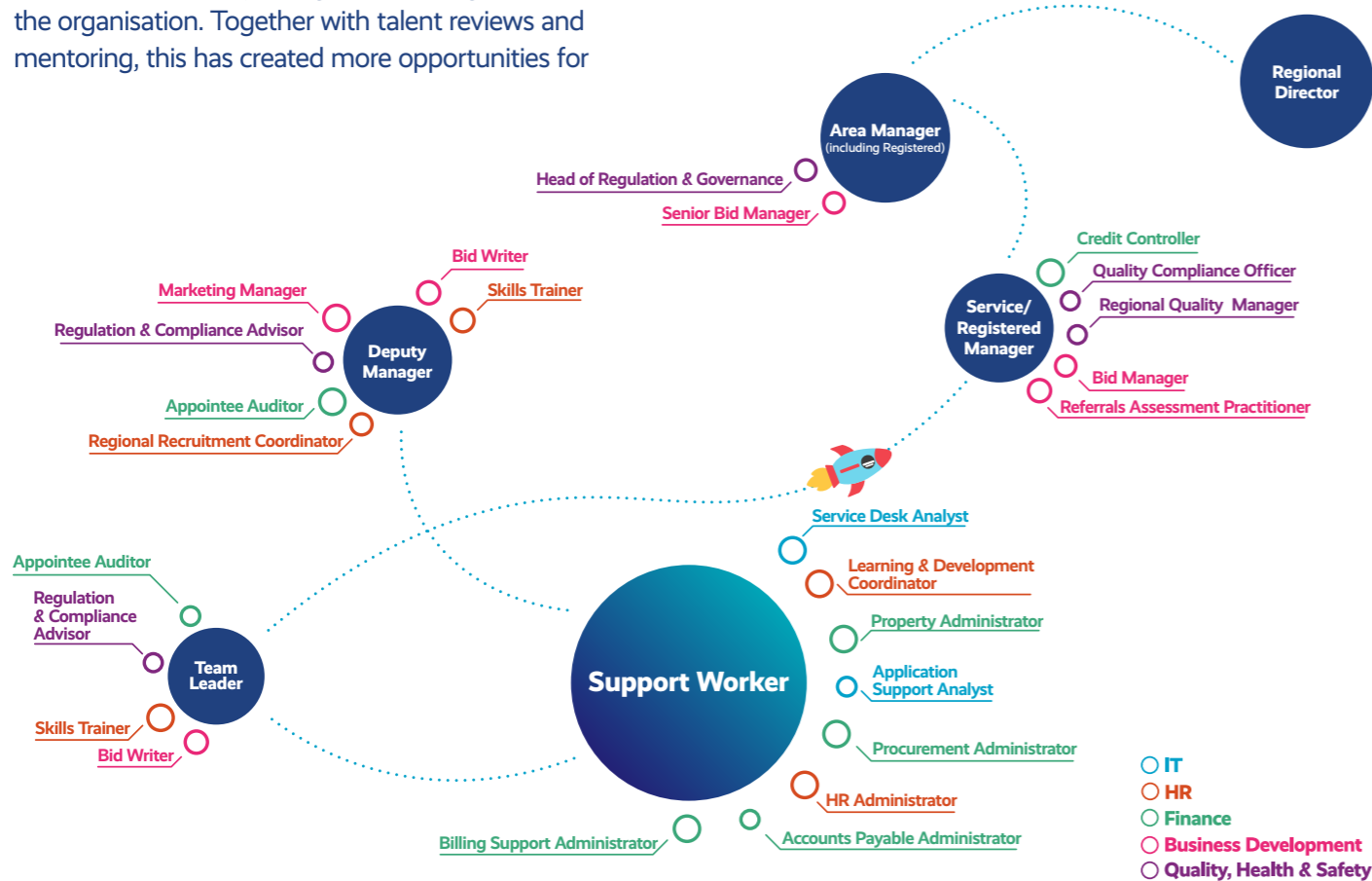
In any job, how a team member feels when they join their employer is critical to engagement and retention. So, we redesigned our induction this year: a new **five-day interactive onboarding** experience (with executive leaders personally involved) now equips every new starter with the skills and confidence to succeed from day one. This engaging welcome has significantly reduced early turnover of new team members.

Career Pathways

We want our team members to see a future for themselves at Lifeways. That is why we introduced clear Career Pathways, helping team members understand how they can grow and progress across the organisation. Together with talent reviews and mentoring, this has created more opportunities for

people to develop their careers with us. We celebrated **345 internal promotions in 2024** and continued that momentum through FY26. Today, **17.3%** of our service and regional manager roles are held by colleagues who progressed from support staff or team leader positions, showing the positive impact of investing in our people.

“
New starter survey results reported **97.6%** felt confident they made the right decision to join Lifeways, and **95.4%** were proud to be with Lifeways and would recommend it as a good place to work.”



Funding

As the external skills and funding landscape continues to change, we are adapting our learning and development offer to make sure team members continue to have access to meaningful progression opportunities. With reforms to management apprenticeships and changes in the use of the apprenticeship levy creating challenges across the social care sector, Lifeways is strengthening alternative development routes, including enhanced internal programmes, targeted leadership development and experiential learning, to support future career growth.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships continue to make a meaningful difference for our team members at Lifeways, giving them the opportunity to build their skills, grow in confidence and develop their careers while making an impact in their day-to-day roles. In 2025, we saw a 7% increase in team members in learning compared with 2024. Just as importantly, 73% of colleagues who achieved an apprenticeship qualification remain with Lifeways, and 41% were promoted or took on additional responsibilities. These outcomes reflect the value of investing in our team members and creating development opportunities that help them grow with us.

Learning offer

We also expanded formal learning: over **4,000** training sessions engaged **26,000+** attendances across topics from core care skills to leadership essentials. Together, these efforts are nurturing a skilled, empowered workforce. Team members report feeling more **confident, supported, and optimistic** about their future at Lifeways as we cultivate the next generation of leaders from within our ranks.



Phil Wilde receiving the Princess Royal Training Award on behalf of Lifeways

Developing our leaders, now and for the future.



In a sector where practice leadership and being well-led are critical to excellence, we are proud of our significant investment in our current and future leaders. This year we continued the rollout of our Operational Leaders' Programme across our organisation. This sustained focus is driving greater consistency in management practices and strengthening operational performance. **The programme has also received external recognition through a prestigious Princess Royal Training Award, highlighting its measurable impact on leadership behaviour, consistency and outcomes.**

To date, 251 managers have successfully completed the Operational Leaders' Programme, with a further 70 colleagues completing the Coaching Improvement programme to enhance the quality of leadership conversations and performance dialogue. In addition, regional development days incorporated experiential learning, enabling managers to practise and improve the quality of their interactions with social workers and local authority commissioners in a safe, high-impact environment.

Identifying and developing talent

To invest in leaders, we need to identify them, so a key milestone this year was the introduction of our first divisional talent review cycle, strengthening our approach. Through this process, 30% of Area Managers reviewed were identified as future prospects for senior leadership roles, demonstrating a strong internal pipeline of talent.

In addition, five high-potential colleagues were selected to join the Senior Talent Programme, ensuring targeted development and succession planning for critical leadership positions. This marks an important step forward in building a more structured, proactive and data-led talent strategy.

A special focus on Team Leaders

We know that our Team Leader role is hugely important: it is the first step into leadership for Support Workers who feel that they have what it takes to build a career in care. So, alongside the continuation of established programmes, we are proud of our newly-designed Team Leader Development Programme, which is ready for launch later this year.

This programme represents a critical next step in strengthening leadership capability at the frontline and comprises three in-depth modules- Managing Quality, Managing People and Discovering Leadership. These are specifically designed to equip Team Leaders with the skills and confidence required to succeed in this pivotal operational role. The Team Leader Development Programme will further embed consistent management practices and ensure this crucial leadership layer is set up for long-term success.

Real career stories

From Support Worker to Head of Regulation – how Lifeways helped me grow

by Cherianne Howe, Head of Regulation & Governance

I started as a sessional Support Worker while studying, which gave me a real grounding in Lifeways’ mission: helping people live exceptional lives. From there, I progressed through operational roles as Team Leader and Service Manager, learning what it takes to deliver great support.

After eight years as a Service Manager, I explored new opportunities and became a Quality Auditor - a role that



allowed me to influence standards and safety across services. It was a chance to make a bigger impact, ensuring people received the best care.

Since then, I’ve moved into strategic positions: Quality Audit Manager, Regulation and Quality Manager, and now Head of Regulation and Governance.

“*Along every step of my journey, Lifeways has provided support, training and development opportunities to help me grow far beyond what I thought was possible.*”

Although I’ve moved from role to role, the most rewarding part of my job is still seeing real differences in people’s lives. One person hadn’t been horse riding for months; we raised it with the team, found a solution, and when we returned, they were riding again - beaming with joy.

That’s what it’s all about: creating the conditions for outstanding support so people can thrive.

From makeup artist to Deputy Manager: My Lifeways journey

By Maddi Hall, Deputy Manager

I never imagined a career in health and social care, but here I am - Deputy Manager at St Matthew’s Court. I started out as a makeup artist, but supporting family members with mental health challenges made me rethink my future. I wanted a role where I could make a real difference.

I enrolled on an access course for mental health nursing and took a bank position with Lifeways. I loved it so much that I stayed full-time and moved to St Matthew’s, where I’ve been ever since.

It’s been a whirlwind! Just last January, I stepped up from Recovery Support Worker to Deputy Manager.

Progression didn’t happen overnight. I worked hard, asked for extra responsibilities, and grabbed every opportunity. When Lifeways offered me the chance to complete a Level 4 qualification, I jumped at it. The support from my management team has been incredible. Whenever I had questions or wanted to put new skills into practice, they made it happen.



“*And that’s the thing about working for Lifeways, it is a company which genuinely cares about and supports your career development – every step of the way. Now, I’m excited to see how far I can go. Lifeways has shown me that with the right support, the sky’s the limit.*”



Having impact Living our values, strengthening engagement.

by Elaine O’Loughlin, Resourcing and EVP Manager

Last year saw Lifeways sharpen its Employee Value Proposition (EVP) and further embed a values-driven culture. We launched a vibrant national recruitment campaign, “You’re Not Just Anyone,” co-created with people we support (including Jessie and Caroline), which went beyond attraction and became a celebration of pride in our work, strengthening our employer brand.

Internally, we redoubled efforts to embed our CHOICE values (Caring, Honest, One Team, Innovative, Courageous, Equal) at every level of the organisation. Our HR Business Partners led interactive sessions at regional development events to share success stories about our culture – a great example being our Weston Road service in Stafford, which leapt from a “Requires Improvement” CQC rating to “Good” in just 10 months by living our values.

Caring **Honest** **One team** **Innovative** **Courageous** **Equal**
CHOICE
The values that inspire us



“*Our leaders are modelling integrity, fairness, and courage in tackling issues, taking shared accountability to drive performance and positive conduct. Local action plans and open dialogue between managers and team members are now the norm, helping people feel heard and supported.*”

As a result, engagement hit new highs and we saw record participation in our annual ‘Your Say’ survey with our employee Net Promoter Score rising by nine points to +74%.

Early feedback from new team members identified opportunities to improve our first day onboarding and manager check-ins, which we are actively addressing. Overall, these cultural advances are helping to bring our “Employer of Choice” ambition to life with team members feeling more connected, valued, and united by a shared mission to deliver the best care every day.



Having a voice

by Andrea Kinkade, Chief Executive

We also ensure our team members know they have a voice, can share ideas & concerns, and address

quality of support being provided through a range of different channels including:

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club is open to all Lifeways team members and is a perfect chance to have an informal chat with the Executive Leadership Team in a relaxed, friendly setting. Held every quarter on Teams, these sessions give team members the opportunity to ask questions on any topic and talk about what really matters to them.

One Team Forum

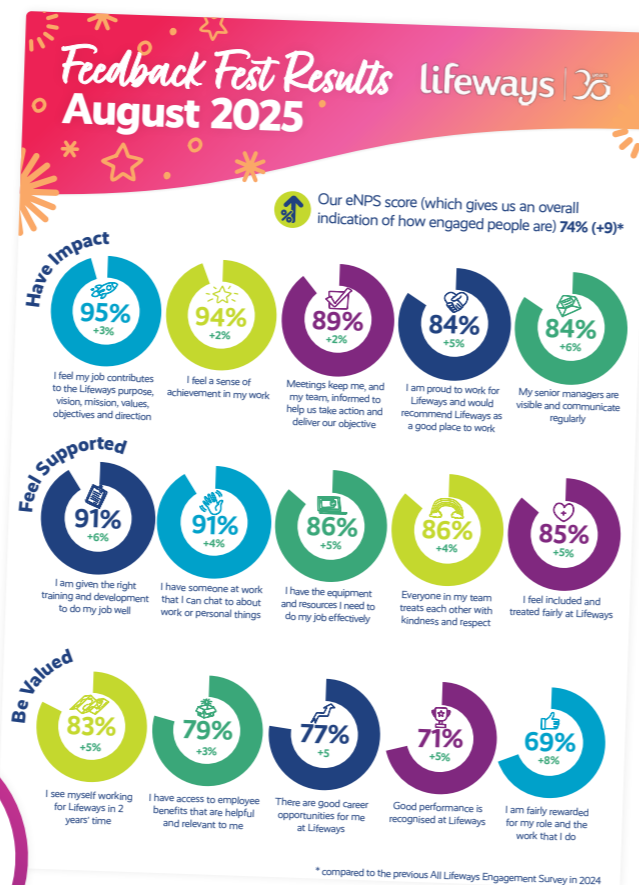
Last year we evolved our former team member councils into One Team Forums, strengthening how insights, ideas and concerns from our operational and support function teams reach the Executive Leadership Team. These forums make sure the experiences of our people shape the way Lifeways continues to grow and improve.

Diversity Council

Our Diversity Council, made up of team members from across Lifeways, is dedicated to championing inclusion, celebrating our differences and identifying ways we can create an even more welcoming workplace. The Council meets monthly to highlight priorities and drive forward actions that support equality, diversity and belonging.

Benefits and recognition

In November 2025 we launched Stream, our new financial wellbeing benefit, and the impact has been impressive with over 41% adoption across Lifeways and 72% of team members opening a savings pot. We also listened to the feedback we received as part of Feedback Fest 2025, where team members told us that celebrating long service was important to them. As a result we launched Lifeways Legends, a campaign to celebrate team members who have achieved long service milestones. Every quarter we share the names of team members who are celebrating 5, 10, 15 and 20+ years' service, and also highlight some inspiring career stories.



Feeling valued

Fairness, wellbeing and celebrating success

by Alouise Mansfield, Reward Manager

In 2025 we took further steps to ensure our people feel recognised, supported and fairly rewarded for the work they do every day.

Our CHOICE Rewards platform was relaunched as a one-stop hub for benefits and recognition. In 2025, it had 6,880 unique logins with 53.8% of team members actively using it and almost 2,000 moments of recognition shared from "Welcome to Lifeways" e-cards for new starters to Lifeways Legends long service awards.

Alongside recognition, we also strengthened our wider benefits. This included five additional days of leave for head office colleagues, a new life assurance plan with added wellness features and more flexible perks through the CHOICE platform.

A major highlight was the launch of Stream, our financial wellbeing app. Within its first three months, 41% of team members chose to sign up with 72% actively using it to save money. Through Stream, team members have accessed £78.7k in earned wage advances and unlocked over £400k in savings and financial guidance, outperforming sector benchmarks. Our innovative approach to financial wellbeing has attracted positive attention across the sector, reinforcing our reputation as a values-led employer with candidates, commissioners and partners alike.

More than half of our team members are actively using our reward and wellbeing tools, fostering a culture where team members feel valued and motivated to thrive.



Right-shaping our organisation to deliver our strategy

by James Westwood-Beere, Chief People Officer

At Lifeways we work hard to achieve our Target Operating Model (TOM) – simply, the way we are structure to deliver our strategic aim to be the provider and employer of choice. Our TOM programme made real progress in 2025, translating transformation plans into improved ways of working. Each business function reviewed its operations to align roles, processes and decision-making with our strategic aims, focusing on consistent ways of working, data-informed decisions and empowering local teams.

The resulting changes streamlined operations and reduced costs, delivering approximately £3.4 million

in annualised savings that translate into value for money for our purchasers and improvements to our support. At the same time, we consolidated teams and introduced new expert roles, including a dedicated Reward Manager, People Services Manager and Deputy Payroll Lead, ensuring the right skills are in place to support effective service delivery.

Looking ahead, Lifeways is actively preparing for significant employment and regulatory change, ensuring the organisation is operationally ready, managers are confident, and policies, systems and processes are aligned.

Strengthened governance, clear ownership across the People and Operations teams, and ongoing engagement with sector bodies, support both compliance and service stability, positioning Lifeways to navigate legislative change responsibly, while continuing to deliver high-quality sustainable care.

Improving HR Operations and Administration

Efficiency, accuracy and service

by Pete Carrington, Head of HR Operations

In November, we centralised our operational HR administration into one HR Administration Hub and established a single People Services team, led by a newly appointed People Services Manager.

This brought HR administration and compliance together under clear leadership and freed operational teams to focus on service delivery. We introduced a new HR ticketing system with defined workflows and service-level tracking, improving visibility of queries, reducing response times, and providing a more transparent and consistent service for team members. As a result, employees benefit from quicker resolution of queries, clearer communication, and a more responsive and reliable HR service overall.



Working in partnership with IT and Operations, we simplified and automated several core processes to make every day experiences smoother for our people. The Deputy e-rostering system is now fully embedded, supported by clear governance and training. This has directly improved roster accuracy, meaning team members are paid correctly and on time, with payroll errors reduced to just 1% well below the 3% industry standard.

We also streamlined onboarding, cutting time-to-hire and giving new starters faster access to the tools, systems and contacts they need to feel confident and connected from day one. Updated people dashboards now offer clearer, more reliable insight, enabling the HR team to provide more proactive support.



Alongside this, we focused on giving managers straightforward, actionable guidance, ensuring people processes are easier to follow and better aligned with day-to-day operational needs. The result is a more consistent, supportive experience for team members across the organisation.



Building teams that care

by Elaine O'Loughlin, Resourcing and EVP Manager

We know the heartbeat of Lifeways is the 10,000 team members who show up every day to support people to live their best lives.

The relationships they build are powerful - built on trust, understanding and consistency. And those relationships are what good care depends on. That's why continuity matters so much, both for the people we support and for our teams - something our engagement feedback consistently reinforces, and something we are absolutely committed to protecting.

In social care, stability underpins everything. Familiar faces build confidence, strengthen relationships, and enable people to live more independent, fulfilling lives. When teams are consistent, care becomes more personalised, more responsive, and more impactful.

In 2025, we focused on improving that stability — making it easier for the right people to join, stay and thrive at Lifeways.

We strengthened our approach to recruitment and retention, starting with how we present ourselves to potential team members. A refreshed careers website and a clearer employer brand brought our purpose, roles and progression opportunities to life, helping attract people aligned with our values.

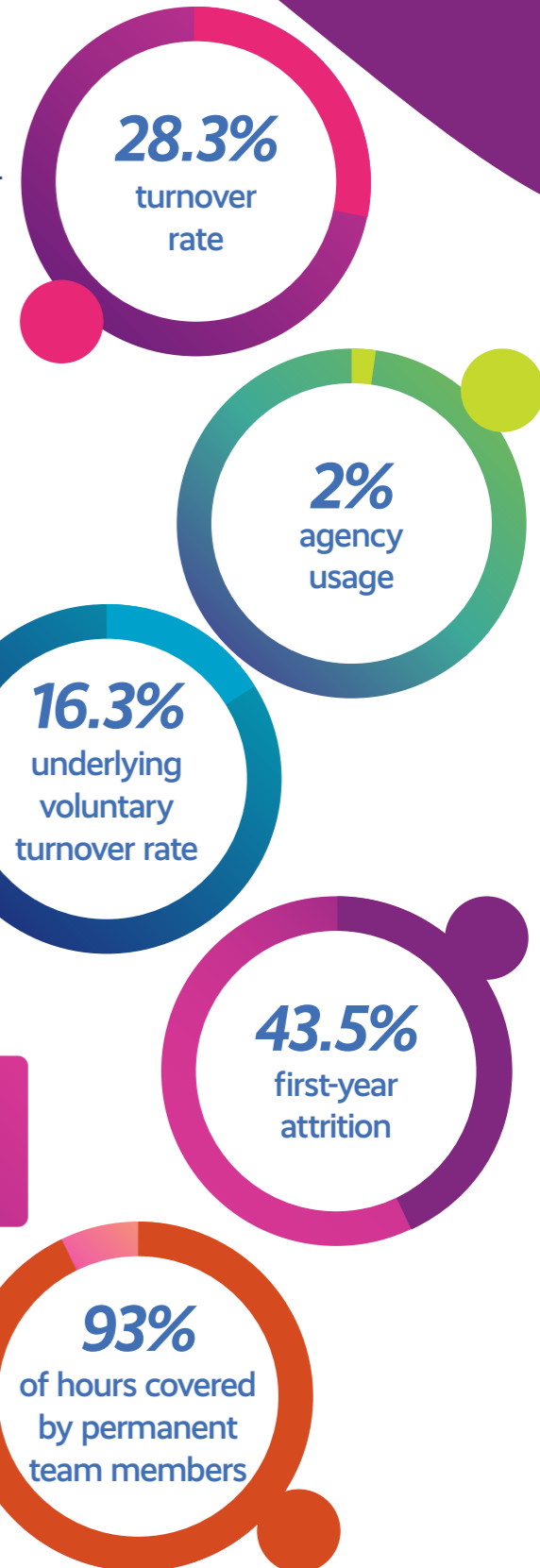
At the same time, we improved our hiring approach - introducing better screening, more support for applicants, and a smoother end-to-end experience. We also expanded our use of digital tools and social media to reach wider talent pools, including career changers and those drawn to purposeful work.

Alongside attraction, we focused on what happens after people join. Improvements to induction, mentoring and early support have helped new team members settle more quickly, build confidence and feel connected from day one.

The impact has been significant - turnover has reduced to 28.3%, down from around 40% two years ago, with underlying voluntary turnover at 16.3%. First-year attrition has reduced by 25%, reflecting the improvements made to onboarding and early experience.

This has translated into more stable teams, with 93% of hours covered by permanent colleagues and agency usage reduced to just over 2%, improving both consistency and continuity of care.

This impact is felt directly by our team members and the people we support. Because when teams are stable, relationships are stronger - and when relationships are stronger, outcomes improve.



Accreditations and affiliations

We are proud to hold accreditations with so many groups, which help shape, influence and positively impact health and social care. We have expanded these through 2025/26.

We believe that our teams at Lifeways can help drive quality across our sector using our skills, experience, knowledge and passion.

Working in partnership



Striving to work collaboratively with its members, stakeholders and Government to implement the foundations of a sustainable future for adult social care.



Working with members and stakeholders in social care to create conditions for sustainable human-rights-based care and support.



Leading umbrella body representing service providers in the learning disability and autism sector, with the aim of improving the quality of life for people who have a learning disability.

Health & safety



Working with members to develop best practice and promote excellence in workplace health, safety and environmental management.



UK's leading provider of compliance and risk management services, helping organisations demonstrate compliance with risk management services.



NASHICS is a membership organisation with the aim of promoting and improving health and safety within care services.

Social care initiatives



Championing Social Care is a volunteer-led group of leaders from across the sector, with a shared vision to ensure a wider and deeper public understanding, appreciation, and respect for social care.



Lifeways also holds an Autism Accreditation with The National Autistic Society for the following registered locations: Our Somerset office, our Swindon office, Elliots Avenue in Peterborough and Larchwood in Bedford.



The Care Workers' Charity's vision is to advance the financial, professional and mental wellbeing of social care workers by making grants, signposting to resources and providing access to services.



Bild develops the skills and culture necessary to understand people's needs and improve their quality of life. This approach applies a rigorous evidence base, broad expertise and long-standing experience to find and enable both short and long-term solutions that bring about lasting change.

Specialist support



Bild Restraint Reduction Network enables organisations to receive direct updates on government legislation and best practice guidelines around use of restraint and restrictive practices.

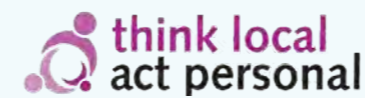


Dedicated to transforming lives and changing attitudes through campaigning for improved rights and training companies on being more autism-friendly.



Non-Abusive Psychological and Physical Intervention – a leading provider of training specialising in managing behaviours that may become challenging through assessment and prevention.

Quality



A national partnership of more than 50 organisations committed to transforming health and care through personalisation and community-based support.



A framework and statements for organisations in health & social care that describe what good, personalised care and support look.



Globally recognised standard for quality management.



Unique to Scotland, the Charter of involvement sets out how supported people want to be involved in their support in the organisations that provide their services, in the wider community.



The Princess Royal Award rewards and celebrates organisations which see the value and wider organisational benefits of investing in learning and development. Lifeways received this award in 2025.

Safeguarding data, ensuring trust



Lifeways has achieved 'Cyber Essentials Certified Plus', a government-backed accreditation that ensures our systems are resilient against cyber threats.



Lifeways is ISO 27001 certified, demonstrating our adherence to international standards for information security management. We also comply with the Data Security & Protection Toolkit (DSPT) which provides a framework for maintaining high standards of data security and protection.

Systems



E-rostering platform to aid workforce planning.



Leading electronic care platform to record, plan, and co-ordinate care plans.



Risk, quality & compliance software to help health and social care organisations to deliver outstanding outcomes through continuous improvement.



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