



Supported living in the North West

In this issue:

- 02 Meet your friendly local team who are here to help
- 03 The latest from Lifeways in the North West
- 11 Support service vacancies in your area

Welcome to Lifeways Links!

The Lifeways newsletter for the North West region

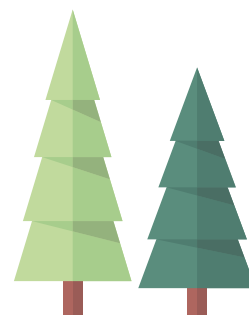
At Lifeways, our commitment is to providing extraordinary support that creates fantastic outcomes for adults with diverse and complex needs. We do this through our stability, our local teams, our strong relationships, and our shared focus on quality and improved outcomes.

We're proud to be known for celebrating the positivity, individuality, and ambition of each person we support.

This newsletter brings you the latest news and articles from Lifeways and our services in the North West.

Hear from Lindsey

Your local Community Engagement and Development Manager.



Hi, I'm Lindsey Briggs.

In my role, I've supported many people across the North West of England to move into their new homes and I've seen the extensive work that my colleagues have put into delivering this support to enable people to live independently at the heart of their community.

We really hope this newsletter will be of interest to you. Please contact me if I can assist you with placements of individuals.

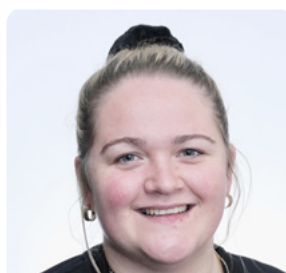
From myself, my team and everyone at Lifeways, we hope you have a lovely festive season and a happy new year!



Simon Creasey



Phil Copley-Jones



Daisy Hodson



Lindsey Briggs

Community Engagement and Development Manager in the North West

0333 321 4881

[Get in touch](#)

Meet our Enquiry, Referral and Assessment Managers

Latest updates from your region

Supporting your winter planning

After another tough year with so much pressure still on the NHS, hospitals and the care sector as a whole, it's reassuring to know that Lifeways are still able to welcome adults with diverse and complex needs over the winter period, often at short notice.

But what about mandatory vaccinations?

We are in a strong position following the introduction of mandatory Covid-19 vaccinations, with none of our services closing, not even temporarily, and many services completely unaffected. You can rest assured that your clients will be in safe hands with Lifeways.

How can Lifeways help?

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

Our experienced assessment teams are always available to work hand-in-hand with you, from arranging introductions, assessments and visits, all the way through to the move being complete and the kettle going on.

If you've got worries about how to place individuals this winter, please do get in touch with us!

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!

The people we support are busy putting up their Christmas decorations and planning gifts!

Like last year, we imagine this Christmas may look a little different from many in years gone by.

Here's a Christmas poem by Lee, who lives at our supported living service in Leeds. It's reprinted here with Lee's permission:



A Normal Christmas

Here comes another Christmas
But Covid's still in the air
This time it feels different
Optimisms everywhere

As people start their shopping
And plan for the big day
Let's hope people take their boosters
So, nothing gets in the way

We'll be able spend time with our families
Throughout the winter holidays
And think of those who we've lost
We'll love them forever and always

We can dream for a white one
But we know it won't come
We dream of a safer place
Although it's too late for some

We know it's not over
But if we all do our best
We'll have our normal celebrations
As we stand up to the Covid test

So' normality's coming
With all those festive cheers
Wishing you all a Merry Christmas
And we hope a happy new year



Why community settings, not private specialist hospitals, are vital for longer-term support

By Alac Pengelly, Lifeways' Regional Operations Director for the South Region.

“What can you offer the people you are assessing that we can't?”

The private specialist hospital's wood-panelled room seemed to quiver from its director's booming voice. The year was 1993.

I can't say I wasn't intimidated. After all, what 23-year-old newly registered care home manager wouldn't be?

However, my answer was clear – if rather hushed.

“We can offer a normal life in a community house,” I told the hospital director.

The private specialist hospital I was visiting at the time housed roughly 1,500 people. The two people at the private hospital I'd been assessing - who the director had been referring to - presented with a learning disability and mental health conditions.

These diagnoses meant they lived with 27 other people in one of the hospital's various wards.

Scandals

Tragically, over the years we've seen and been horrified by various scandals in private specialist hospitals - with the most notorious being Winterbourne View.

In 2011, when reports of the horrendous abuse and mistreatment at Winterbourne View came to light, we've seen a plethora of central government policy and local authority initiatives seeking to prevent parallel tragedies from ever happening again.

The key aim behind these initiatives discourages the use of private specialist hospital settings for long-term accommodation for people who live with autism or a learning disability.

Sadly, one decade later, we continue to see reports detailing incidents of mistreatment in private specialist hospitals.

Continued reductions

It's not all bad news. Encouragingly, in the past decade we've seen a reduction of 1,350 people who live in state-funded private specialist hospital inpatient beds, Learning Disability Today reported earlier this year. However, that still means there are 2,050 individuals who live in a private specialist hospital setting.

The question we in health and social care should ask is: Do we think that figure is good enough?

We should acknowledge that the general level of support in hospitals in recent years may mean a better environment than we saw three decades ago.

Thankfully, private specialist hospitals in 2021 may be less intimidating, and they may be more personalised for the individual.

But what a hospital can never provide is a long-term home for a person, or a sense of belonging or community – both key elements to forming a life a person would choose.

The task of supporting a person with complex support needs in the community can be tricky - and working in social care isn't easy.

Yet with the right support package, most - if not all individuals - can live in community settings, not private specialist hospitals. We've seen it here at Lifeways.

The almost 5,000 adults we support thrive and are supported to grow their independence in open, non-restrictive settings, almost always connected to a community in a city, town, or village.

For example, we operate The Avenue, a large detached house which is a supported living service for four adults with complex needs. The service is just a ten minute walk into the town of Tiverton, Devon.

Then there's Loch Park in Moray, north-east Scotland, where adults who live with learning disabilities take part in ventures such as selling sustainably sourced food and firewood to the community.

Both these services are hugely different - but what binds them is a commitment to take part in and be part of the local community.

Win-win

Supported living settings are a win-win for the taxpayer, too. The average cost for a person's support as an in-patient is £3,000 a week - or £156,000 a year.

Meanwhile in community settings, costs vary dramatically depending on the individual's needs, but you're generally looking at half that cost.

By the end of 2020, 3,730 incidents of restraint in NHS-funded inpatient beds were recorded in one month. This means over a

year, there could be over 44,000 separate incidents of physical intervention.

And the reality of restraint-heavy care gets even more worrying. Of the 2,050 people who are currently inpatients in private specialist hospitals, each individual could be subject to a physical intervention 22 times a year. Although this figure would vary heavily from individual to individual - as not every person is subject to physical interventions - the number still shows a disquieting dynamic.

Talking louder

Of course, on occasion, private specialist hospital admittance may be the best-fitting environment for some people who live with autism or learning disabilities.

But for an overwhelming majority of individuals, I'm convinced that the social care sector can assist with providing community settings for individuals who currently live in private specialist hospitals.

While we at Lifeways don't think that the model of community-based settings are a panacea, or fix-all solution, we know that people who receive support living in the community make social care better for everyone.

This means community-based settings benefit large swathes of society: individuals who need support, support teams, funders, community members, and taxpayers.

Let's rewind to the beginning. What happened to the two people I assessed back in 1993? They both moved into the community-based house I ran as Registered Manager. Thankfully, both individuals flourished in the independence-boosting setting they lived in.

Would I change anything I said to the private specialist hospital director I was talking to back then? No, I wouldn't - but I would say it a little louder.

[Read more](#)

Residential service in Southport holds co-production day!

A Lifeways residential service in Southport recently brought together individuals we support, families and the support team for fun, food, and competitions – and a co-produced plan for even better support.

The action-packed day was the first get-together Abingdon has held since the pandemic began.

With guidance from Lifeways' Quality Team, the co-production day saw everyone involved at the service finalise what they want support to look like in the coming months wouldn't be?

The co-production plan's actions included:

- completing art projects
- taking part in activities to improve health and wellbeing, such as swimming and board games
- extending the garden to take part in more outdoor-based activities
- planning a charity event
- creating Abingdon's own newsletter
- individuals we support getting even more involved in recruiting their own support team to more closely match new team members.

During the day, the support team and individuals held a barbecue, alongside charity fundraising competitions, including a tombola.

In total, almost £100 was raised on the day, which will be donated to Southport's Queenscourt Hospice.





A brilliant day

“Today has been a brilliant day,” said Chris Regan, the Registered Manager.

“It has provided the tools to make the service an even better place for everyone who lives here. We are proud of everything we have achieved and are going to achieve in the future!”

Also present at the co-production day was Jodie Allen-Cawley, Lifeways’ Group Lead Quality Manager.

The aim of the service’s co-produced plan is to ensure that individuals who live at the service remain in control and continue to design their own support.

“It was just an absolutely great day,” said Jodie. “It was amazing to be back face-to-face with the people we support and their families, helping people to dream big, and make the co-produced support we provide even better.”



What is co-production and why does it matter?

Co-production refers to a way of collaborative working that is practiced at Lifeways.

This means that everybody in a service – including individuals who receive support, support workers, and family members – works together on an equal basis to make sure everyone has an equal voice, or come to a decision which works for everybody involved.

The Think Local Act Personal national partnership, of which Lifeways is a member, calls co-production a ‘meeting of minds coming together to find shared solutions.’

Or, as Josie, an individual we support who lives in Morecambe, Lancashire describes co-production: “when I get support, it’s a working-together-and-helping-each-other-thing.”

Hear from the people we support

‘My voice is my biggest tool’ Holly plans her next steps - a psychology degree!

When you're a young adult with support needs, transitioning to a very different setting can feel daunting.

Holly, who's 19, is ambitious. She lives with a rare genetic disorder, known as EDMD Emery-Dreifuss muscular dystrophy, but doesn't let that stop her living life to the full.

This summer, Holly moved from her parents' house to her new self-contained apartment at a Lifeways supported living service, near Chesterfield in Derbyshire. Her parents live just 20 minutes' away.

But like many people at her stage of life, Holly was keen to live independently – while maintaining close family ties.



The right place

Holly knew it was the right place for her before she even set foot in the building.

“Staff immediately came outside and were really welcoming,” says Holly, recalling her first visit to the service. “I instantly thought, ‘I like this.’”

However, the process of moving away from her parents' house wasn't a quick one. The first hurdle was finding a social worker to help Holly access funding for her support.

As a result, and with several more obstacles to overcome, Holly's move ended up taking 18 months.

Yet, determined to make the most of the time during the transition, Holly completed from home a Level 3 diploma in Media and TV production at Chesterfield College, a course she passed with a ‘Merit.’

Freedom

Since moving in to the supported living service, which is based in Gloucester, Alisha has flourished. She feels she enjoys life to the full.

“I was so happy when I moved in – although it was a bit weird going from living with 23 other people to being just me and one member of staff. I felt like I had really accomplished something.”

As an individual we support at Lifeways, Alisha was involved in choosing her support team. She decorated her room in the colour she wanted, and put up quotes on the walls. “I've made it feel like home,” she says.

Alisha also enjoys spending time with housemates, now that more people have moved to the supported living shared house. “We sometimes do theme nights and group dinners,” she says. “It feels like a homely, friendly environment.”

Continues on next page ►



Adulting

Moving to supported setting with lots of independence also comes with responsibilities, which Holly calls 'adulting jobs'.

"I've had to work out how to do my own bills," says Holly. "Sometimes being an adult can be difficult, but I've loved it."

Holly enjoys keeping in regular contact with her family, and her two younger brothers regularly come over to her apartment to enjoy fish-and-chip takeaways together.

And as her dad is a truck driver, he often stops by and says hello on breaks from his journeys.

Next steps

Right now, Holly's taking a gap year before her next step' a psychology degree at the Open University.

Holly believes a psychology degree will help blend her interest in media and marketing with a deeper understanding of what makes people tick.

She also thinks the degree will give her a greater understanding of how people who live with disabilities are perceived in society.

"I really like studying psychology because it helps me understand people around me. says Holly.

Holly's keen to use her voice to shine a light on life with a disability. She credits her mum for being her biggest advocate for her own independence.

"Growing up, living with a disability means you're seen as different, or weird, or in a different category of society...people have these stereotypes. I find it interesting to find out the psychology behind that, and try and change their minds."

"I have a condition that can be not very nice. But I have a voice, and my mum always says my voice is my biggest tool and I use that, and I explain to people and I educate people about my disability."

[Read more](#)



A day trip!

Craig and John from our Rossendale, Lancashire supported living service, enjoyed the day at a favourite spot: the seaside town of Cleveleys. They had a great day!

Naomi's new qualification!

Look who's building skills! Naomi, who lives at our supported living service in Warrington, is really proud of proud of achieving an Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in English. Congratulations, Naomi!



Getting back to bowling!

Neil, who lives at our supported living service in Morecambe, Lancashire, hasn't lost his touch!



Halloween at Lifeways!

Across Lifeways' 1,500 services, we'd carved jack-o'-lanterns, making spooky treats and scary decorations, and most importantly, had lots of fun!



Supported living vacancies in the North West

Hampden Road

Tranmere, Wirral

Hampden Court is a beautifully converted church building with five one-bedroom apartments, each with a wet room-style bathroom and an open-plan kitchen and lounge area. The property has a yard for people to relax in when the weather is good.

We are ready to welcome someone from any age group. At Hampden Road, people choose how they spend their time, and enjoy shopping, volunteering, walking, swimming and going out for lunch.



[Full details](#)



Apple House

Blackburn, Lancashire

The building has 12 one-bedroom apartments - the ground floor apartments are wheelchair accessible, and the upper floor apartments can be accessed via a lift. Each apartment has a kitchen, living room, and a wet room-style bathroom. There is also communal area and a sensory room. Outside there is a garden with a trampoline for people to use when the weather is good.

Apple House is ideal for a person with learning disabilities or autism. People living here enjoy trampolining, listening to music, socialising and being in the community. Day trips to Blackpool, Southport, Stockport and the coast are favourites.



[Full details](#)

Matchwood Close

Liverpool, Merseyside

Matchwood Close is a collection of three detached houses where people are supported to live independently. Each house has four-bedrooms, a kitchen, dining room, lounge area and three bathrooms - one with a toilet and sink, one wet room-style en-suite, and one shared bathroom with a bath and/or shower. Matchwood Close also has a separate designated quiet lounge. There is an accessible garden at each house for people to spend time relaxing outside when the weather is good.

At Matchwood Close, we support people with varying needs. Of the three houses in the street, one is for men only and the other two are for women. People enjoy volunteering, gaming, socialising and being in the community.

[Full details](#)



Holman Road

Garston, Liverpool, Merseyside

Holman Road is a semi-detached four-bedroom shared house where people with mental health conditions are given specialist support to lead fulfilling and independent lives. There is a lounge, dining room, kitchen and a small garden to the side. There are two shared bathrooms, one on the ground floor and one on the first floor.

Life at Holman Road is suitable for people with mental health conditions who require recovery-focused and personalised support to live independently. We are ready to welcome a new female resident who would enjoy a homely environment in a great location.

[Full details](#)

Bentham Close

Blackburn, Lancashire

Bentham Close is a three-bedroom bungalow with a kitchen, an open-plan living room and dining area, a quiet room, a conservatory and a wet room-style bathroom. Outside there is an accessible garden with a patio and BBQ for people to use when the weather is good.

Life at Bentham Close is suitable for people with brain injuries, learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities and mental health conditions. We currently support two women here aged 21 and 58 who live with learning disabilities.



[Full details](#)



Strathmore Road

Kensington, Liverpool

Strathmore Road has 13 one-bedroom apartments, each with an open-plan kitchen, dining room and lounge area, and a bathroom with a shower. There is also an accessible garden for people to spend time relaxing outside when the weather is good. This service has recently been refurbished to a high standard and provides a homely and modern environment.

At Strathmore Road, we support men with mental health needs. They enjoy peace and quiet and have a good level of independence, so another man with a similar outlook is very welcome.



[Full details](#)

Refer to Lifeways with confidence

From the moment you get in touch we'll work hand-in-hand with you, from arranging introductions and assessments all the way through to completing the move.

Step 1

Call or email us with your referral and we'll gather all the information we need to start the referral process.

Step 2

We'll arrange a one-to-one assessment to spend time with the person, their social worker and family, to understand their current situation, support needs and their medium- and long-term ambitions.

Step 3

Once we've built our recommendation for support, we'll arrange for the person, their family and social worker, if requested, to visit our available homes giving the opportunity to meet our team and ask any questions.

Step 4

We'll produce a funding proposal detailing the support hours required and then send it for funding approval, making sure all stakeholders are kept up to date with the progress.

Step 5

Once the funding is approved we'll agree on a move in date and start the transition with everyone involved. We'll be on hand to offer support and guidance throughout to make sure everything runs smoothly.

Learn more about the independent living that we provide, make a referral or arrange a visit by contacting Lifeways:

Call **0333 321 4881** Email referrals@lifeways.co.uk

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