



Welcome to our provider newsletter for April 2025. In this edition, we have included some important updates about the activities being undertaken by the Commissioning Team and some good news stories that have been shared by some of our providers.

Probably the most important area since last writing was publication of the Uplifts for 25/26. Councils have a duty around market sustainability and uplifts are a key part of our approach. For 2025/26, the council has had to look at the increases to the national living wage and changes to

employer national insurance, both largely unsupported with any additional funding, but we recognise the impact that these changes had on providers. It's never accurate to compare yourselves to other areas as all areas are different, but we do compare favourably to other regional offers and feel that the uplifts put in place show the commitment we have to supporting and working with the market. We continue to want to engage with providers around the best way to tackle the challenges that they face around recruiting and retaining the workforce, whilst also improving the overall quality offer across Walsall.

If you would like to see the latest market update for 2025/26, please visit [Adult social care commissioning | Walsall Council](#).

Our spotlight for April 2025 includes:

- Market uplifts
- Quality Assurance
- Commissioning update
- Co-production
- Market Position Statements
- International recruitment
- Good news stories shared by providers
- New local history book honours late Queen

Provider Forums

- Residential & Nursing – 10/04/25
- Community-Based Services – 23/04/25
- Supported Living – 15/05/25

Feedback

If you have any feedback about our newsletter or have suggestions about future content, please email adultsocialcarecommissioning@walsall.gov.uk

Comments, compliments and complaints

To suggest improvements, compliments or complain about our services, please visit [our website](#).

Commissioning update

There is now a carers strategy in place that was approved at Cabinet last month. Supporting carers is a key area for us, as well as ensuring people can continue to work if they are unpaid carers themselves. We will share details of the action plan for supporting carers with you at future Provider Forums, but it would be great to hear from you if your company does anything to support carers that we can promote.

The council has secured funding to support a focus on international recruitment, in particular any people who find themselves out of work. This has been an issue for a number of providers recently, so we will be looking to discuss your approach to international recruitment.

Community Reablement has been running since the start of November, and we are starting to see the benefit of this with people being supported to be independent. We will keep you updated on this so you can understand the impact this has had on commissioned support against the general back drop of increased demand. Regular residential and nursing, community-based services and supported living provider forums have been implemented and engagement has been very vibrant and productive.

The Market Position Statements have been the focus for a number of the latest forums and the Residential and Nursing figures have been published on the commissioning webpage ([Adult social care commissioning | Walsall Council](#)).

Quality remains high on our agenda, particularly in light of issues that have arisen over the last period. Work on developing a local quality mark is progressing and you will be invited shortly to help shape that into a useful tool which we can all use in Walsall. We will also be getting in touch with most providers over the next period to get a better view of where you all are in relation to a couple of quality areas. This will help us understand who needs or wants our help.

Please remember this newsletter is designed to keep you informed, inspired, and connected with the latest updates, good news stories, and insights from our team. We encourage you to interact with us, share your thoughts, let us know about any positive outcomes that you would like to share about the individuals that you support and what you would like to see in future editions. Your feedback is invaluable and helps us tailor our content to better serve you.

Director of Commissioning



Market Position Statements (MPS) Update

The new Residential and Nursing MPS 2025-2040 has been published on the commissioning website. This document is crucial for residential and nursing providers to read, and we look forward to further discussions with you and co-design of future models. The Community-Based Services (CBS) and Working Age Adults with Long Term Needs MPSs (including supported living, shared lives and other services) on current and future demand and supply of care and support services needed in Walsall will be published at the end of this month. These documents will be published on the commissioning external website in weblink format and as a pdf for providers to use for business planning purposes. We hope that they are informative for providers and stimulate market development conversations with commissioners to meet the intentions set out in the market position statements.

Living Well at Home & in your Community Pilot Project

Commissioners in Walsall are also initiating a new pilot project around homecare and community-based services to trial different approaches to homecare and other community-based services. This pilot will be designed to test a move to outcomes-based, more flexible and delegated care and support arrangements and alternative payment mechanisms for providers. It will test connections between services in localities and different workforce skills and arrangements to seek to enhance the experience and outcomes for users of services and the experience of providers and services working in communities. More will follow on this development with an expression of interest issued early summer to providers.

Lisa-Kay Waite, Co-Production Lead Officer

I joined the Commissioning Team in January 2025 to help embed co-production within Adult Social Care. Prior to working here, I worked as an Ambassador for Health Inequalities in the NHS and have also gained years of experience in Children's Social Care as a registered residential home manager. These roles aided me in advocating for the needs of the people I supported and getting their voices heard in the places they needed to be.



One of my aims this year for Walsall is to co-design a Co-production Strategy for the council with input from those with lived experience. It's really important for me to help facilitate change and create positive outcomes with the voice of the public being at the heart of all we do. We are looking for local people in Walsall to help shape adult social care services to create better experiences for people who access our services.

If you have any queries about co-production or you would like to join our volunteer group to help shape better services, build your knowledge, skills and confidence and contribute to improving services for your community, please email lisakay.waite@walsall.gov.uk.

International Recruitment



The Government introduced a Health and Social Care working visa and we estimate that 19% of our staff working with care providers are overseas. We currently have 57 care providers who have recruited staff from overseas. The council is:

- Enhancing its business intelligence about international care workers in Walsall
- Developing a dedicated webpage for international recruitment. This will include lots of advice, support and guidance both for care providers and workers.
- Recruiting a dedicated international recruitment worker for a period of 12 months who will be based in commissioning. This post will be a key link person to support and advise Adult Social Care with international recruitment and link with providers.

A monthly International Response Team has been formed in partnership with Walsall Healthcare NHS trust, Commissioning, Quality in Care Team, Public Health, Legal Services, Community Safety, West Midlands Care Association, Adult Social Care and the Care Quality Commission. If you have any queries about international recruitment, please email asccommissioningir@walsall.gov.uk.

LIFTED have been appointed with a number of other organisations to help providers recruit international care workers and provide support and alternative jobs for those who have unfortunately lost their roles. If you would like to know more about LIFTED, please visit [Sponsored Recruitment for UK Care Providers without the hassle | Lifted Talent](#).

Provider updates



Louise Poxon, Inglewood Residential Rest Home

In 2024, the home invested in a greenhouse specifically for a resident who has been a vivid gardener, with a particular love for nurturing plants and growing fresh produce. The greenhouse has become sanctuary for the resident, a place when he can focus on cultivating tomatoes and other plants. Over the summer, the resident proudly shared his homegrown tomatoes, which we incorporated into a delicious summer salad enjoyed by all the residents. It was heartwarming to see the sense of pride and accomplishment on the resident's face as everyone complimented the freshness and flavour of his produce. The responsibility of tending to the greenhouse has not only given him a renewed sense of purpose but has also significantly improved his overall well-being. Spending time in the greenhouse has helped him manage his health anxiety by providing structure, a sense of accomplishment, and the calming benefits of nature. His enthusiasm has inspired other residents to take an interest in gardening and healthier eating, creating a positive ripple effect throughout the home. This story is a testament to the power of personalised care and the difference it can make in someone's life. If you would like to know more about this case study, please contact the registered manager at Inglewood Residential Rest Home on 0121 352 1113.



Meher Khushbu, Care Home Manager for Shire Oak House

Has shared some positive outcomes about four residents that have been transferred to an independent setting to enable their independence following the support they received to regain their independence since their admission to Shire Oak House. The care home has achieved 97.8% in their infection prevention and control audit and their environmental health score went up from 4 to 5. For learning and development, the care home's Deputy Manager and Senior Carer have started their level 5 in leadership and management to help develop their skills and experience to use core management techniques to drive better results.

Tanya Petty, Executive Manager for Caring Care Ltd

Has shared some wonderful feedback they have received from the West Midlands Ambulance Service regarding one of their carers, Mr Kutub Uddin. The feedback highlights the compassion and professionalism demonstrated by Mr Kutub during a recent interaction with a patient in need of emergency support. Whilst West Midlands Ambulance Service were attending to one of the service users supported by Caring Care Ltd, Mr Kutub showed amazing care and compassion for the patient. Mr Kutub was helpful, honest and patient to the service user's needs and the service user was clearly very reassured by this carer.

New local history book honours late Queen



Following the recent book launch event hosted by the Mayor of Walsall, Councillor Anthony Harris, we have sent a copy of 'Walsall Celebrates Queen Elizabeth II, Stories of The Queen's visits and Jubilee parties' to our care homes in Walsall. Commissioned by Walsall Council in 2022, this beautifully curated book brings together treasured memories of over 100 participants, each sharing unforgettable moments during the Queen's reign including her Coronation in 1953, vibrant Jubilee celebrations and Her Majesty's official visits to Walsall. We hope the book will start conversations with your care home residents about their own memories of when the Queen visited Walsall and Jubilee street parties. If your care home residents would like to share their stories on our social media channels, please email chris.wilkinson@walsall.gov.uk.