

Response ID: ANON-2M3C-9Z2X-J

Respondent: Windermere & Bowness Town Council

Preferred option: Option 2: Refurbish Applethwaite Green

Reason for preference:

FAO Miranda Cannon, Chief Executive, Westmorland & Furness Council

19 August 2026

Dear Ms Cannon,

Applethwaite Green Care Home Public Consultation

I write on behalf of Windermere & Bowness Town Council in respect of the above consultation.

On 8 July 2026 at a Full Council meeting, it was resolved that Windermere & Bowness Town Council's preferred option on the future of Applethwaite Green Care Home is to refurbish the building. Furthermore, Windermere & Bowness Town Council resolved to support the retention of Applethwaite Green Care Home with the minimum of disruption caused to residents whilst an upgrade to the building takes place.

At the Full Council meeting held on 12 August 2026 it was resolved to additionally respond to the consultation in the following terms:

Westmorland & Furness Council's Vision for Care recognises that residential care homes will still be needed for people who are no longer able to stay in their own home; Windermere & Bowness Town Council understands this is the situation of the residents currently residing in Applethwaite Green Care Home.

It is of concern to Windermere & Bowness Town Council councillors, some of whom were present at the public meeting held on 28th July at the Ladyholme Community Centre, that apparent misleading statements were made by Westmorland & Furness Council officers at that meeting.

It appears that:

- The reduced capacity of the home is due to a deliberate policy decision made by Westmorland & Furness Council not because of a lack of demand from local residents as stated within the consultation process. It was confirmed that Westmorland & Furness Council restricted the number of placements available at the home.
- Similarly, the difficulties in recruiting permanent staff appear to be due to the possible closure of the home rather than the local market conditions. Staff currently employed at the home state that it is the consultation on the home's closure that caused former staff members to leave.
- Several times in the meeting the lead Westmorland & Furness Council officer [Nikkie Phipps, Director of Care Services] stated that the legal minimum room size was 12m squared; it had to

be clarified with her that this requirement was only for 'new build' or extended homes and not relevant for existing care home accommodation.

- There was also mention of en-suite facilities being required. It is Windermere & Bowness Town Council's understanding that there is no legal requirement for en-suite facilities in all rooms. They may be a requirement for new build care homes, but ensuite facilities are not always the most practical option for all residents; accessible, specialist equipped bathrooms can make shared bathrooms a more suitable and inclusive choice.
- Despite figures of potential costs of rebuilding and/or refurbishment being mentioned at the meeting by the Director of Capital Delivery and Assets, Allan Harty, it was made clear, after questioning, that there had been no full costing exercise undertaken for a refurbishment of the building. E.g. a rebuild figure was stated at an estimate of £6.5 million but it transpired that this related to a new home built at Barrow.
- A member of the public reported that on contacting Applethwaite Green Care Home they were informed by staff that the home was closing in April 2027. If correct, this clearly undermines the legitimacy and integrity of the consultation process, particularly when the lead officer at the meeting had previously recommended closure of the home.

At the meeting members of the public were told that the consultation on the closure of Applethwaite Green Care Home is unlikely to be the last, and other care homes may be identified for closure.

It is of concern to Windermere & Bowness Town Council that should Applethwaite Green Care Home close, there is a likelihood that other homes, including those where residents of Applethwaite Green Care Home will be relocated to, could also close. If this happens it will increase the detrimental impact on residents' physical and mental health because of being moved more than once; together with the stress on family members being unable to visit them, if they are relocated a distance away from the current care home.

Windermere & Bowness Town Council support the comments made by local residents, and others, in support of the home remaining open; particularly those of P. Lord and P. Macnamara in their consultation responses.

Windermere & Bowness Town Council urge Westmorland & Furness Council to continue to retain and maintain Applethwaite Green Care Home and to abandon the consultation process until Baroness Casey's review on social care is reported in 2027.

As to the financial background to the closure consultation, Windermere & Bowness Town Council understands that this is due to a £43m reduction in the grant from central government. Windermere & Bowness Town Council is concerned about the financial impact of other cutbacks there may be on services received by its residents from Westmorland & Furness Council and would seek reassurances from Westmorland & Furness Council in this regard.

I should be grateful if you would copy this letter to all Westmorland & Furness Councillors and officers involved in the decision-making process, including but not limited to, the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet members together with the Corporate Management Team.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Bev Cullen, Mayor, On behalf of Windermere and Bowness Town Council

Further comments: Please see above concerns about the consultation process; the impact on residents, staff and families. The suggestion to delay the consultation pending Baroness Casey's review on social care.

Response ID: ANON-5C6V-9N7W-S

Respondent: Hawkshead Parish Council

Preferred option: Option 2: Refurbish Applethwaite Green

Reason for preference: Although the residents will be rehomed for a period of time, they will be back in the local area. Future residents will have a local place to move into with family and friends in the lakes not having to travel to Kendal where given the greater distance they may not get as many visitors or as long with times of visits.

Further comments: The Parish Council at Hawkshead would like to fully support the refurbishment to provide a local facility, and residents with family and friends in the area will stay local and not be isolated.

Response ID: ANON-9D3M-4Z9W-U

Respondent: Coniston Parish Council

Preferred option: Option 2: Refurbish Applethwaite Green

Reason for preference: Coniston Parish Council considered the consultation at its June meeting. It believes that this is vital provision and that the proposal to close it outright should be opposed. We believe that if there are building and other issues that make the refurbishment of this property impossible that it should be maintained until adequate other local provision can be made.

Further comments: We noted with dismay that all alternative provision was a considerable distance away from Furness and our community. Although Windermere is not close to Coniston we believe that our residents and their families would find accommodation there to be far more suitable than to have to be accommodated in Kendal, Beetham and Grange.

Response ID: ANON-2S4P-5R6H-E

Respondent category: Grange & Lakes Primary Care Network

Preferred option: Option 2: Refurbish Applethwaite Green

Reason for preference: Applethwaite Green is the only remaining significant residential care home in the northern half of the Grange & Lakes PCN area (Grasmere/Ambleside/Coniston/Windermere). This is an area with a higher than average elderly population and limited provision of social care in the home. Furthermore, residents deteriorate to a position when residential care becomes the only realistic option as they are unsafe at home even with support services. To have no local option for residential care for all this area is totally unacceptable. Close family members, in particular spouses will find travel to visit their loved ones in homes in Kendal, Grange or Milnthorpe to be very challenging result in distress and guilt for them and social isolation for the individual requiring residential care.

Further comments: The council needs to invest in the future provision for this population and whilst doing so, look at how to minimise disruption for the current residents.