From: Tim Farron <tim@timfarron.co.uk>
Sent: 27 April 2026 15:01
To: MPEnquiries westmorland <MPEnquiries.westmorland@cumbria.gov.uk>
Cc: Patricia Bell <patricia.bell@eden.gov.uk>
Subject: (Case Ref: TF184208)

Dear Cath and Patricia

I write to represent my constituents, who are residents, relatives of residents and staff at Applethwaite Green Residential Care Home in Windermere with regard to its possible closure.

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me to discuss this proposal and I am sure you will understand I remain deeply concerned. I understand that this would not have been an easy proposal to make, nor do I think, under other circumstances, you would want to take this action and I understand the Government's budget cuts have left you in an untenable situation.

Despite this, I believe it is essential that we protect the residents' wellbeing and it is my duty to make a strong case for residents to remain in their current home.

Therefore, please find below some example of the stories that been shared with me, which I believe highlight the need for these to be carefully considered as part of the consultation.

Residents' and relatives' views:

"I visit my mother every day and over time our family has developed strong relationships with the dedicated staff and fellow residents at the home. As my other relatives live in the South or overseas, I am the only family member she sees regularly. Moving her to a different care home would, in effect, leave her without her only consistent family contact."

and:

"I'm writing to express my dismay that Applethwaite Green Residential Home in Windermere is under a 12 week consultation programme and that one of the outcomes may be closure.

Closure would be devastating for the residents, staff, families and community. It is a much needed facility for everyone.
I wanted to share my mums story with you.

My mum is 97 next week and has been a resident at Applethwaite Green since March 2025. Mum was born in Morecambe and spent most of her life in central Lancashire returning to Morecambe 28 years ago to retire. Mum had a very full and enjoyable retirement, spending her time doing many activities. Ballroom dancing, playing the organ, many many outings, gardening and spending time with her family.

Last year both mum, I and my siblings realised that even with extra help Mum was unable to live alone.

Mum decided that she'd like to live close by to me where she would have constant contact with family.
Applethwaite Green was ideal, a short walk away from my house.

We visited Applethwaite Green together and could see it was a warm and welcoming home with excellent facilities and a kind and caring team.

The then manager explained that Applethwaite Green was due a refurbishment and although there seemed to be empty rooms it was due to the future refurbishment. Mum was offered a place with a lovely room and we were over the moon.
Over the past few months Mum has had some health issues but is now stable. She has received great care and understanding from the team at Applethwaite. They even moved an organ into the lounge so she could play again.
I visit Mum every day and I'm the one daily constant in her world (apart from the wonderful team, of course). We spend our time together talking about our lives and family. Family is really important to Mum

Mum has just started going out again (it's been a long winter!) with us in Windermere.

If Applethwaite were to close it would be devastating to us all. The thought that we won't be able to visit every day if mum were to be placed in Kendal, Ulverston or Barrow due to cost, time and travel restrictions is unthinkable . It'll have a severe effect on mums mental health losing contact with the people who care for her and the constant family contact. She trusts the care team and they understand her.

We may not be able to keep in touch with family as much and our little walks out in the village (weather permitting) will severely restrict mums interactions with the local community.

This is just my little story - I realise that everyone has a story too. Just chatting to the care team and other residents I realise just how awful closure of this much needed home would be.

There are 15 residents at the moment and to disperse them across Westmorland & Furness would be tragic for them. They all have their friendship groups which are

important to them too."

and:

"As a family we have always been very close and are always around each other. It is particularly important to me to have my nana close by so I can visit and keep in touch. It is important that my nana is cared for and looked after which is why we chose applethwaite, not just for location and standard care but because of the personal level of care the staff have and give.

They're all excellent and know my nana on a personal level, they're all extremely caring and kind to my nana ensuring she's relaxed and feels valued and comfortable at all times.

The staff are easy to communicate with, accommodating and nice to be around. They do what's best for every single resident and are supportive to families.

My nana was nervous to go into a care home, settling her at Applethwaite Green had its challenges and differences in routine but she now considers this home and is very comfortable and happy. To move her again would be extremely stressful for her.

I would be absolutely gutted to see Applethwaite green shut its doors and think they provide excellent care and I have the following questions: -

- *Regulations - are all other homes in the area to the standard?*
- *What is the standard requirements of new builds that it doesn't meet?*
- *Staffing problems - to myself there are lots of regular staff who have a direct caring relationship with nana - new people will affect her anxiety - especially if it's 100% agency staff, which we believe to be the case at some alternative homes, how can staffing be an issue when some in Kendal are manned 100% on agency levels?*
- *We chose applethwaite due to the location for nana to be close to her family, daughter, son in law and grand children - regular visiting*
- *She is only able to contact her other two children when one of her family are present due to location being Australia and London, we regularly FaceTime on a weekly basis. This could potentially change and affect her routine and keeping in touch with family.*
- *At least one of our family visit every single day*
- *Having nana close by is very important to us, if she's moved elsewhere visiting will become harder which will effect her mental wellbeing and health*

- *Nana knows all other residents as they know her, what happens to these connections if they're separated? Again another huge change to routine.*
- *What happens to the wider community requiring care if there is no available facilities in Windermere? As far as I'm aware this is the only home providing this level of care*

In addition, the residents and their relatives have also highlighted some key points from the following documents:

Westmorland and Furness Council Annual Plan 2025/26, which includes the following statements:

"We will be ensuring our adult social care services are high-quality, promoting independence and supporting people to live their best lives and the council listens and takes pride in delivering services that make a difference. It is a modern, innovative and inclusive council with communities and customers at the heart of everything we do."

Westmorland and Furness Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy, which includes the following statements:

We will *"provide support and guidance to ensure our seldom-heard groups can be heard and fully take part in consultation and engagement and an approach that ensures that residents, and the community, understand how their involvement can, and where possible, has influenced decisions."*

Westmorland and Furness Council Market Position Statement - Adult Social Care 2025-2027

"Quality: no care homes are rated inadequate.

Users view: the majority of residents are very happy about the quality of their Care and feel involved in the Care planning process."

Given the information provided in these publications, the residents would like to know:

How does closing this care home align with the Council's commitment to ensuring high-quality adult social care services?

In what way is closing a long-standing care home an *"innovative"* or *"inclusive"* approach to adult social care?

What specific steps were taken to ensure that seldom-heard residents, such as those with dementia, communication difficulties or limited family support are able to

meaningfully participate in the consultation?

How will the Council rebuild trust with residents and families if its actions appear to contradict its published values?

Staff views:

"I am writing to respectfully request your support regarding the proposed closure of Applethwaite Green Residential Home Windermere by the Westmorland and Furness Council.

This situation is of great concern to many of us, and I felt it was important to reach out directly to seek your guidance and assistance.

You may already be aware of the proposal; however, I want to emphasise the profound impact it is having on everyone connected to the home.

The news has been deeply distressing for residents, their families, friends, and for my colleagues and me. For many, Applethwaite Green Residential Home is far more than a care facility, it is a place of comfort, stability, and belonging.

The thought of it closing has created significant anxiety and uncertainty, particularly for vulnerable residents who rely on the continuity of care and familiar surroundings.

Given the seriousness of this situation, I would be extremely grateful for any support, advice, or representation you can offer in helping us advocate to keep the home open.

Your experience and voice would be invaluable in ensuring that the concerns of residents, staff, and the wider community are properly heard and considered.

We are very keen to explore all possible avenues to challenge or review this decision, including raising awareness and gathering community support."

and:

"I have worked at Applethwaite Green for 35 years and to my utter devastation to find that a press release from the Westmorland gazette that we are functionally obsolete home running on high agency cost and have one of the highest running cost per service user to find this out this in the paper was disgraceful not just to me but are clients and staff there are a lot of support workers that work with the home and have been delivering high quality care for more than 30-40 years in the community of Windermere all staff are from the local community that work within the home and were devastated to read that we do not meet the CQC requirements even though we hold a fiver good rating on caring,safe, effective,responsive,welled.

As of yesterday 21 April we were informed that Applethwaite Green has gone into consultation for 12 weeks where we have some time to start a campaign of why we should still function as a care home we are the only ASC home in Windermere are next available care home is Kendal this is funded by ASC there seems to be lack of support for are elderly in Windermere were I have based a 35 year plus career when it was discussed yesterday
To have Applethwaite Green close would mean that there will be no adult socially funding places within the Windermere area only 1 private residential care home being max capacity 7 slot of are clients across the board are socially funded and would not be able to afford private care and would ASC fund the difference I do not think so we have capacity for 27 clients within the care home and have 16 clients there at the moment.

In 2025 we had a bed block put open us as we were told that we were up for refurbishment and that we had to keep numbers low due to transferring to Maude's meadow while updates to the building was happening this block continued to be in place until late last year and then we were told that we were not going to be refurnished we are taking new clients latest being last week just before the press release if this bed block was not put in place we would most likely be full to capacity as we have had to turn potential new admissions away because of this bed block and mostly likely would not be in consultation now.

All ASC homes are running at high cost with agency workers due to the poor recruitment within the council and the time it takes for a new worker to start with the home if they have not found alternative employment elsewhere in which the recruitment policy does need to be looked at and updated and looked in to.

All ASC homes have the same pricing across the board physically frail and Dementia pricing so I find it hard to take that we are one of the highest client per bed.

Taking this local resource from the community will be lack of social housing as clients give up there council houses to come into care also the effect it would have on the economy taking money from the community and high job losses within the rural community of Windermere.

Clients have sold their properties to fund their care they will not be able to go home and receive care in the community as ASC director Cath Whalley is saying through a survey conducted within the area that people want to stay in their own homes and have care it is a bit to late for some of are clients.

Applethwaite Green is a warm safe caring home and I hope that you will ask questions in information I have shared with you and back a campaign to keep us open we have already lost the Abbey in staveley and temporary closure of Maude's meadow know operating as rehab for hospital discharges."

and:

“I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed closure of Applethwaite Green Care Home in Windermere. As a member of staff, this is not only a place of work for me, but a community that provides essential care, stability, and dignity to its residents.

The potential closure raises serious concerns about the wellbeing of the individuals who live here. Many of our residents are vulnerable and rely heavily on the consistency of their environment, the familiarity of staff, and the quality of care we provide. Relocating them could be extremely distressing and may have a negative impact on their physical and emotional health.

From a staff perspective, this decision would also affect livelihoods and disrupt a dedicated team who have invested time, compassion, and professionalism into supporting residents every day. We take pride in the care we provide and strongly believe that the home continues to play a vital role within the community.

I respectfully ask that this decision is reconsidered, or at the very least, that further consultation is carried out with staff, residents, and their families before any final steps are taken. Exploring alternative solutions could help preserve both the service and the wellbeing of everyone involved.”

Conclusions:

Could you please advise where the consultation pack can be accessed? I would appreciate receiving a copy. I have been told it is not yet available, which raises concerns about how the consultation process can be considered compliant if the relevant information has not been made available to the public.

Regardless of the current financial situation, I find these accounts deeply moving. They demonstrate that Applethwaite Green is working well and I question whether alternative providers would offer any improvement in terms of facilities; indeed, it would be difficult to find staff with such dedication elsewhere.

Furthermore, if the closure were to go ahead, would you consider relocating all 15 residents together as a community? I believe this would significantly help to reduce their anxiety.

I am also concerned about the wider impact of closing a rural care home. It would be deeply regrettable for constituents who have spent long and fulfilling lives in the Lakes to be moved far from their support networks purely on the grounds of cost-effectiveness.

Therefore, it is essential that I make a strong case for the residents and staff to remain in their current home and positions and I would be grateful if you could consider these views, address the issues raised in this referral and answer my constituents' questions, as part of the consultation process.

Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

TIM FARRON MP

Information Governance Team ● T: 01539 637437 ● E: mpenquiries@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Tim Farron

2 June 2026

Dear Tim

Correspondence Received to Westmorland and Furness Council - Ref: MP-208822-2026

Thank you for your enquiry dated 29/04/2026 regarding represent my constituents, who are residents, relatives of residents and staff at Applethwaite Green Residential Care Home in Windermere with regard to its possible closure.

Thank you for your email dated 27th April 2026. The comments and feedback that you have sent through have been included as part of the consultation. The first drop-in session was this morning, and we are collating information and encouraging people to submit written responses to the consultation so we can gather all of the information available. Due to the timing of your email, I believe some of the questions being posed have answers already, but for ease I will address each one.

How does closing this care home align with the Council's commitment to ensuring high-quality adult social care service?
As detailed in the consultation pack, the home is a building which has a layout and room sizes which no longer meet regulatory and modern care standards.

In what way is closing a long-standing care home an "innovative" or "inclusive" approach to adult social care?

There are a number of people who are referred to Applethwaite Green, who will need to be declined for admission as the home will not be able to meet their needs. These limitations are around space; size of room needed and do not offer the opportunity to support to all individuals and not just those who are able to be accommodated in smaller rooms.

What specific steps were taken to ensure that seldom-heard residents, such as those with dementia, communication difficulties or limited family support are able to meaningfully participate in the consultation?
During the consultation period, individual views will be sought where appropriate as part of the process through both Healthwatch and N-compass, offering independent support and advocacy to ensure that all views are being taken into account. Where there may be people of have a lack of capacity to express their view around this particular consultation, support will be given to feed in based on information from the advocacy support being given.

How will the Council rebuild trust with residents and families if its actions appear to contradict its published values?
Throughout the consultation process, there will be a focus on listening to people to understand their views and opinions. These will be through the feedback submitted and the drop-in sessions which are available for the public to access.

Could you please advise where the consultation pack can be accessed? I would appreciate receiving a copy. I have been told it is not yet available, which raises concerns about how the consultation process can be considered compliant if the relevant information has not been made available to the public.
The consultation launched on 14th May 2026 and will close on 5th August 2026. The online version was available and started receiving responses on the 14th May and since the launch we have provided over 400 paper copies so far.

The consultation packs are available in Windermere, Ambleside and Kendal Library, as well as being available in Applethwaite Green. There are packs available at the public drop-in sessions, and online at consult.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/adult-social-care/applethwaite-green. There is a QR code for ease of access and for any questions or support to complete the documentation there is support via email at care.consultation@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk, alternately you can call 0300 373 330.

Furthermore, if the closure were to go ahead, would you consider relocating all 15 residents together as a community? I believe this would significantly help to reduce their anxiety.

The process for identifying alternative placements has not begun due to not wanting to predetermine the outcome of the consultation, and a service with capacity to support an additional 15 people in a relatively short space of time may be difficult to identify.

Yours sincerely,

Nikkie Phipps
Assistant Director – Care Services

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further questions.

Kind regards

Information Governance Team
Westmorland and Furness Council

From: tim@timfarron.co.uk
Sent: 09/06/2026 15:40:14
To: MPEnquiries.westmorland@cumbria.gov.uk
Subject: Concerns for local care homes (Case Ref: TF185584)

Dear Cath

I write to represent my constituent, [redacted] of [redacted] KIRKBY STEPHEN, [redacted] with regard to her concerns about the long-term sustainability of residential homes under council management.

"As a relative of someone who has been in our local council care home for many years I am concerned that the homes are being let to run down. It is a catch 22 position where they either don't have enough staff to have many clients or they can't get the staff so they can't have many clients. These homes are so needed and I'm sure there are many people bed blocking in hospital that could be residents in our homes. I know that social services try hard to get patients back into their own homes with care packages but sometimes this is just not appropriate whereas a residential home is perfect. I truly believe that if our residential home hadn't been available when we needed it for our relative then she wouldn't be alive today. The staff are amazing. These homes can not be sustainable with only a handful of clients. We need them full to give the staff morale a boost and feel that they are doing a great job. I understand Alston & Windermere and in a worse position at the moment, I do hope that they can be saved."

I would be grateful to understand the steps Westmorland and Furness Council plans to take to ensure that these care homes can continue to provide an essential service long into the future.

Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

TIM FARRON MP

Information Governance Team ● T: 01539 637437 ● E: mpenquiries@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Tim Farron

11 August 2026

Dear Tim

Correspondence Received to Westmorland and Furness Council - Ref: MP-213625-2026

Thank you for your enquiry dated 15/06/2026 regarding the future sustainability of residential homes under council management, including Applethwaite Green & Grisedale Croft.

Thank you for contacting Westmorland and Furness Council on behalf of your constituent, [redacted], regarding the future sustainability of the Council's residential care homes.

Please convey our thanks to [redacted] for taking the time to share her views and experiences. It is particularly heartening to hear her recognition of the dedication and commitment shown by staff working within our care homes. We know that our residential services provide an invaluable source of support for many residents and their families, often at particularly difficult times in their lives.

The Council fully recognises the importance of maintaining high-quality residential care provision within our communities and understands the concerns that can arise when occupancy levels are lower than expected or when recruitment challenges impact service delivery. These are issues being experienced across the health and social care sector nationally, and we continue to work proactively to address them locally. The situation at Christian Head in Kirkby Stephen mirrors Applethwaite Green in that its difficult to recruit staff in the area and as a result the home cannot be fully occupied as a result.

We remain committed to ensuring that our residential homes are able to meet the needs of residents both now and in the future. To support this, the Council regularly reviews occupancy levels, workforce requirements, service demand and the long-term sustainability of each of its care services. We continue to invest in recruitment and retention initiatives, staff development and service improvement programmes to strengthen our workforce and ensure residents receive the highest possible standard of care.

The Council also works closely with hospital discharge teams, social care practitioners and NHS partners to ensure that individuals receive care in the setting most appropriate to their needs. Whilst supporting people to remain independent in their own homes remains an important objective where this is safe and achievable, we fully recognise that residential care continues to be the best option for some individuals and forms a vital part of the wider care and support system.

We understand the concerns regarding occupancy levels within some of our homes, including those referenced by [redacted]. Demand for care services can fluctuate, and placement decisions must always be guided by individual assessments of need, personal choice and availability of suitable services. However, the Council continues to monitor these services closely and explore opportunities to maximise occupancy whilst maintaining high standards of care and ensuring residents are appropriately supported.

The future provision of residential care remains an important consideration for Westmorland and Furness Council. We are committed to working with residents, families, staff, local communities and partner organisations to ensure that our services remain responsive, sustainable and capable of meeting future demand.

Thank you once again for bringing [redacted] concerns to our attention. We hope this response provides reassurance that the Council recognises the significant contribution that its residential care homes make to local communities and remains committed to securing sustainable, high-quality care services for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Nikkie Phipps

Director of Care Services
Westmorland and Furness Council

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further questions.

Kind regards

Information Governance Team
Westmorland and Furness Council

From: tim@timfarron.co.uk
Sent: 11/06/2026 16:20:21
To: MPEnquiries.westmorland@cumbria.gov.uk
CC: Patricia.Bell@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk
Subject: Applethwaite Green Community Group - A Place Called Home (Case Ref: TF185674)

Dear Cath and Patricia

I write to represent my constituent, [redacted] and the Applethwaite Green Community Group with regard to the consultation on the closure of the Applethwaite Green Care Home.

[redacted] writes as follows: -

"I am writing to you as a nominated representative of Applethwaite Green Community Group.

Group members which consist of residents, families, staff as well as the locality have been alarmed at the article in the Westmorland Gazette of the 5th June 2026 ***'Council to pay out after dementia patient not given adequate care'.***

This comes at a time when members are participating in the councils 'The Future of Applethwaite Green Care Home' consultation and survey in retrospect to the proposed closure of this care home in our community which would result in residents being removed out of their community, away from their families and friends and into unfamiliar surroundings.

The 11 page document has only attributed 8 pages to highlight issues the council deems to be fundamental in their decision to close Applethwaite Green. It is apparent that this document does not present adequate (if any) evidence that would reasonably inform any participant in making an educated response to the 4 options offered.

The consultation paper draws primarily on the councils' vision, calling it 'A Place Called Home', whereby elderly, infirm and the frail are cared for in their own homes rather than in a residential home where staff are on hand 24/7.

A care home is (in almost every case) the last resort that anyone would wish for themselves prior to incapacity. But when the ability to care for oneself elapses the hope of a local home within their familiar community & close to family and friends is essential for their wellbeing, mental health as well as human rights.

Therefore, the 'said' article published in the Gazette as well as research and data we have received underpins that the Vision of the council is not in anyway in the best interests of the individual.

And

The 'Community Conversation' regarding 'your living choices in later life' commissioned and undertaken by the council have not been debated or the finding published.

It also raises further questions to which the answers would be openly welcomed.

1. ***What would the cost of an adequate home-based care package be compared to residential care?***
2. ***How is the standard of care monitored as well as the individual receiving the care?***
3. ***Why has the council used 'A Place Called Home' as their primary lever in its consultation document when they have not provided any data or evidence to support it?***

It is evident from the case cited in the gazette article that this approach is severely lacking in many areas and obviously has put the lady in question in a terrible situation that only her family were able to deal with.

On behalf of the Applethwaite Community Group I would be grateful for a response to the above questions and be provided with supporting evidence, data or reports in support of your answers.

We are delighted that the council has said that this 'consultation is about listening'. But in the mean time we would like to ensure that we are afforded with the information whereby we can better articulate our opinions and views.

We very much look forward to your response to the above."

Please will you address the concerns and questions raised by the group?

Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

TIM FARRON MP

Information Governance Team ● T: 01539 637437 ● E: mpenquiries@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Tim Farron

13 August 2026

Dear Tim

Correspondence Received to Westmorland and Furness Council - Ref: MP-213780-2026

Thank you for your enquiry dated 16/06/2026 regarding the consultation on the closure of the Applethwaite Green Care Home.

Please accept our apologies for the delay in providing the below response.

In answer to your constituents enquiries, please find below a response to each point they have raised -

1) What would the cost of an adequate home-based care package be compared to residential care?

In Westmorland and Furness, home-based care packages costs are based on the amount and type of support identified through a Care Act assessment. The Council sets standard hourly rates for different levels of home care support. From April 2026 these are -

- Tier 1: £26.57 per hour
- Tier 2: £29.45 per hour
- Tier 3: £34.70 per hour

For Adult Social Care packages, the council also calculates a personal budget, which is the amount allocated to meet the person's assessed eligible needs. This budget is based on the assessed care requirements.

The cost of an adequate home-based care package varies depending on the individual's assessed needs. Based on current Westmorland and Furness home care rates, a package requiring around 3–4 hours of support per day could cost approximately £560 - £980 per week, with significantly higher costs for people requiring intensive support throughout the day and night.

By comparison, the weekly cost of an Independent Residential Care placement starts at approximately £850.85 per week.

The weekly cost of a Care Services Residential placement starts at approximately £933.52 per week.

Therefore, a home-based care package may be less costly than either Independent Residential Care or Care Services Residential Care for people with low to moderate support needs. However, where individuals require substantial support throughout the day and night, the cost of home-based care can exceed the cost of both residential care options. Cost is based on assessed need, desired outcomes, individual preference, and value for money.

2) How is the standard of care monitored as well as the individual receiving the care?

Home Care

The quality of home care services is monitored through a combination of regulatory inspection, provider quality assurance processes and local authority oversight. Home care providers are required to be registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and comply with national standards of care, safety and governance. Providers undertake regular staff supervision, training, competency assessments, audits, spot checks and incident reporting to maintain service quality. Westmorland and Furness Council monitors commissioned home care services through contract management arrangements, quality assurance processes, complaints monitoring, safeguarding procedures and feedback from people using services and their families.

The individual receiving home care is monitored through regular reviews of their care and support plan to ensure that their assessed needs continue to be met and that the service remains appropriate. Where needs change, reassessment can be undertaken and care packages adjusted accordingly. Information from care providers, health professionals, family members and the individual themselves is used to inform ongoing review and monitoring. Concerns about quality, safety or wellbeing can be escalated through review, complaints or safeguarding procedures.

Residential Care

The quality of residential care is monitored through provider quality assurance arrangements, local authority contract monitoring and regulation by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residential care homes are subject to inspection against national standards relating to safety, effectiveness, responsiveness, leadership and quality of care. Providers undertake regular audits, staff supervision, training, medication monitoring, incident reporting and quality improvement activity to ensure standards are maintained. Where placements are commissioned by the Council, quality and performance are monitored through contractual arrangements, safeguarding processes and feedback from residents and their families.

The wellbeing of individuals living in residential care is monitored on an ongoing basis by care home staff through care planning, risk assessments and regular review of needs and outcomes. Adult Social Care will also undertake reviews of commissioned placements to ensure the placement continues to meet the person's eligible needs and desired outcomes. Any concerns regarding care quality, changes in health or wellbeing, safeguarding issues or complaints are investigated and acted upon through established review and safeguarding procedures.

3) Why has the council used ‘A Place Called Home’ as their primary lever in its consultation document when they have not provided any data or evidence to support it?

"A Place Called Home" is not the primary lever of the consultation; rather, it provides the strategic context for how Westmorland and Furness Council intends to support people in the future. It sets out the Council's vision for adult social care, including supporting people to live as independently as possible in their own homes and communities where appropriate.

The primary levers for consulting on the future of Applethwaite Green are set out separately within the consultation document and relate to the specific challenges facing the home. These include the age and condition of the building, its inability to fully meet modern care and regulatory standards, the significant investment required to refurbish or rebuild it, declining occupancy levels, workforce challenges, and the high cost of operating the service compared with other residential care provision. The consultation document notes that Applethwaite Green has 27 registered places but a substantially lower number of occupied beds, resulting in high costs per resident. It also highlights estimated refurbishment costs of £2.5 - £3 million and operating costs that are significantly higher than comparable provision.

Therefore, the consultation should be viewed as being driven primarily by the operational, financial and building-related challenges facing Applethwaite Green, with "A Place Called Home" providing the broader strategic vision within which those challenges are being considered.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

Service Manager - Cumbria Care
Westmorland and Furness Council

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further questions.

Kind regards

Information Governance Team
Westmorland and Furness Council

From: tim@timfarron.co.uk
Sent: 19/06/2026 16:25:41
To: MPEnquiries.westmorland@cumbria.gov.uk
Subject: (Case Ref: TF184208)

Dear Nikkie

I write to further represent my constituent, [redacted] and her brother [redacted] of [redacted] WINDERMERE, [redacted] with regard to their Mum, [redacted], who is a resident of Applethwaite Green Care Home.

[redacted] family has sent me a copy of a recent report they obtained under the FOI Act (RDT 02 Part II - Consultation on Care Home A.pdf).

As you will be aware, these Cabinet papers show that the closure of Applethwaite Green was the Council's preferred option; I would like to reiterate that I have deep concerns about this being the preferred option, for the reasons I have already outlined.

In addition, in your recent response, MP-208822-2026, you stated that:

"The process for identifying alternative placements has not begun due to not wanting to predetermine the outcome of the consultation, and a service with capacity to support an additional 15 people in a relatively short space of time may be difficult to identify."

Thinking further about this issue, this statement deeply worried me, as I disagree with the view that the Council is unable to consider where residents will go.

I believe it would be impossible to determine whether the proposed closure is acceptable without clarity on what alternative placements would be available. Identifying these options is essential and without this information, making any decision about the home's closure would be unacceptable.

Therefore, I would be grateful if I could have your thoughts on this point.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

TIM FARRON MP

Information Governance Team ● T: 01539 637437 ● E: mpenquiries@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Tim Farron

5 August 2026

Dear Tim

Correspondence Received to Westmorland and Furness Council - Ref: MP-214509-2026

Thank you for your enquiry dated 19/06/2026 regarding Applethwaite Green Care Home.

Thank you for your further correspondence on behalf of [redacted] and [redacted] regarding their mother, [redacted], a resident of Applethwaite Green Care Home. I appreciate you taking the time to raise these additional concerns and recognise the anxiety that uncertainty regarding the future of the home is causing residents and their families.

I note your continued concerns regarding the Cabinet papers obtained through a Freedom of Information request, which identified closure as the preferred option presented by officers prior to the decision to undertake consultation. The strength of feeling expressed by you and local residents on this issue is recognised and will form part of the consultation feedback considered by decision-makers.

It is important to distinguish between the option initially recommended within the officer report and the consultation subsequently approved by Cabinet. Whilst the report presented to Cabinet identified closure as a preferred option, Cabinet did not adopt a preferred option for the Applethwaite Green consultation. Instead, Members agreed that consultation should proceed on all four options, allowing stakeholders to provide views on each before any final decision is taken.

You have specifically requested further comment regarding the Council's previous statement that the process of identifying alternative placements for residents has not commenced. I understand why this may cause concern and appreciate the importance families place on understanding what future arrangements could look like should changes ultimately be agreed.

At the present time, no decision has been made regarding the future of Applethwaite Green. Consequently, it would not be appropriate for the Council to begin securing or reserving alternative placements whilst a live consultation remains underway. To do so would risk creating a perception that the outcome of the consultation had already been determined and could undermine confidence in the integrity of the process.

There are also practical considerations. Residential care vacancies fluctuate regularly as admissions and departures occur across the care market. Any attempt to identify, reserve or hold a block of placements in advance of a decision would affect availability for other individuals requiring care and support and could impact the wider care sector.

Should a future decision require residents to move temporarily or permanently, whether because of refurbishment, redevelopment or closure, the Council would undertake a structured transition process. This would involve social work professionals, independent advocates, residents, families and care providers working together to identify the most suitable arrangements for each individual.

You have also reiterated the suggestion that existing residents might relocate together as a community if a move became necessary. The Council recognises the value of established friendships, familiar relationships and community connections within care settings. This point has been noted and would be considered carefully should any future transition planning be required. However, individual needs and preferences would remain central to any decisions.

To support both the consultation process and any future decision-making, independent advocacy arrangements remain in place through N Compass and Healthwatch to ensure the views of residents and families are heard and represented.

I hope this provides reassurance regarding the Council's approach. We remain committed to conducting a fair and transparent consultation and to ensuring that the welfare, dignity and wellbeing of residents remain at the centre of any future decisions concerning Applethwaite Green.

Yours sincerely,

Cath Whalley

Strategic Director - Adult Services
Westmorland and Furness Council

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further questions.

Kind regards

Information Governance Team
Westmorland and Furness Council

From: tim@timfarron.co.uk
Sent: 11/06/2026 16:31:44
To: MPEnquiries.westmorland@cumbria.gov.uk
Subject: (Case Ref: TF184208)

Dear Nikkie

I write to further represent my constituent, [redacted] and her brother [redacted] of [redacted] WINDERMERE, [redacted] with regard to their Mum, [redacted] who is a resident of Applethwaite Green Care Home.

Following your recent response: MP-208822-2026, which I shared with residents, [redacted] contacted my office and outlined the following: -

"Thank you for your email of 5th May 2026: I am replying on behalf of our family to the responses by Nikkie Phipps (Assistant Director of Care Services). I note that it has taken one month for her to reply to your original email: this is symptomatic of the WAFC approach to the whole consultation.

She makes a point about the unsuitability of the Applethwaite Green building as it no longer meets 'regulatory and modern care standards.' From what we have seen, this is true of the WAFC residential homes referred to in the consultation document as possible alternatives (see below). As we understand it is only necessary for Applethwaite Green to meet the regulatory standards prevailing when it was built and in place as of March 2022.

In response to your question about how closure fits with an innovative and inclusive approach to social care she argues that some applicants may need to be declined because of the limitations of the building. The implication here is that because Applethwaite Green cannot meet the needs of all potential applicants then it should be closed and all existing residents decanted into homes that are no better than Applethwaite Green. I confess I fail to understand the logic of this and would welcome any further information you can glean on this.

She asserts that 'throughout the consultation process, there will be a focus on listening to people to understand their views and opinions' The drop in-sessions referred to are all well and good but it is our view that a more structured meeting with the residents and families would help us to make the case for Applethwaite Green to remain open. My sister has attended these sessions and has not found them particularly fruitful in terms of getting answers to specific questions. We have asked also to meet Windermere Councillors to establish their position on the future of Applethwaite Green and to enlist their support in resisting closure; they have proved somewhat elusive, only now has one Councillor offered the possibility of a date sometime in July (to be confirmed) which is rather late in the process and undermines our trust in WAFC.

She refers to views of residents being sought through a process involving individual support and advocacy. We have asked several times for clarification of this process together with the timescales as we need to prepare Mum for this and ensure that a family member is present when meetings take place. We understand that this will be a three stage process of a Capacity Assessment, Advocacy and a final Best Interest Assessment but we have had no indication of any time frame as yet even though we are approaching one month into the three month consultation process. This is not satisfactory and we would welcome anything that you can do to get an early clarification of timescales for this.

As we are now one month into this process we have the following observations on the future of Applethwaite Green.

While it is true that WAFC is reviewing the philosophy underpinning its delivery of care services for older residents, it is clear from Council discussions that one of main drivers behind considering the closure of Applethwaite Green is the need to make savings of £1.387 million in adult social care to meet the council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

In the consultation document a 'Community Conversation' called 'A Place called Home' is referred to. This was not directly part of the consultation process but supports the shift in adult social care policy cited in the consultation document towards care in the home rather than in residential care homes. We have asked for details of this Community Conversation and have been told that, although it is cited within the consultation document, a report will not be finished and presented to the Council until July: this is a rather curious state of affairs given the weight placed on its conclusion that 'the prospect of living in a residential care home….was seen negatively and only as a very last resort.' The last resort may come to us all: our Mum lived independently for 17 years following the death of her husband [redacted] *for the last year she had home carers so going into a care home was the last resort but I don't see this negatively. If you could extract any information this Community Conversation from the Council we would be grateful.*

The Consultation Document lays out four options for the future of Applethwaite Green and says 'no decisions have been taken about the final outcome'. This may well be true but a report by Care Services was taken at the Council meeting of 21st April and clearly states closure of Applethwaite Green was the preferred option. (We can send you a copy of this report obtained under FOI should you wish)

In terms of the rationale for the closure there are many points we could and no doubt we will make through the consultation process but a few key ones are as follows

In terms of the rooms and facilities Applethwaite Green is no worse than other WAFC homes in Kendal and Milnthrope: we have visited one and been shown rooms that were

clearly worse than that currently occupied by our mother. The nearest alternative private home does not for various reasons come up to the standard of Applethwaite Green. We also note that two of the homes in the list in the consultation document, although rated as Good overall by the CQC, have a judgement of 'requires improvement' against the safety category.

Much is made of the running costs of Applethwaite Green: we obviously do not have access to detailed financial data but would simply make the point that the figure of £2315 per resident is based on the existing occupancy of 15. This is half the capacity of Applethwaite Green and is the result of a conscious decision by the Council to run down occupancy in preparation for a scheduled refurbishment: this in the end did not take place and the budget for it we understand was vired elsewhere. If Applethwaite Green were to run at an increased capacity then obviously the cost per capita would come down significantly.

It goes without saying that our preferred option for Applethwaite Green is that it should remain open with refurbishment as necessary, however, given the above, we are not at all sanguine that this will be the outcome and foresee that the Council's preferred option of closure will be pushed through.-

Thank your for your help in this matter and we look forward to hearing from you."

Please will you address the concerns raised by [redacted] in his recent email?

Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

TIM FARRON MP

Information Governance Team ● T: 01539 637437 ● E: mpenquiries@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Tim Farron

11 August 2026

Dear Tim

Correspondence Received to Westmorland and Furness Council - Ref: MP-214524-2026

Thank you for your enquiry dated 24/06/2026 regarding a resident of Applethwaite Green Care Home.

Thank you for your correspondence on behalf of your constituents regarding the ongoing consultation on the future of Applethwaite Green Residential Care Home. I am grateful for the opportunity to respond to the concerns that have been raised.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the strength of feeling among residents, relatives and the wider community. We appreciate that this consultation concerns a much-valued local service and that the prospect of change can be unsettling for those directly affected. We are committed to ensuring that all views are heard and carefully considered before any decisions are made.

I would also like to apologise for the time taken to respond to some enquiries during the consultation period. The consultation has generated a significant volume of correspondence, alongside public meetings, drop-in sessions and engagement activities. Our priority has been to provide thorough and considered responses to individual questions, rather than issuing incomplete or generic replies.

A number of concerns have been raised regarding the suitability of Applethwaite Green and comparisons with other residential care homes. While Applethwaite Green complies with standards that applied when it was originally built, the building presents challenges in meeting the needs of modern residential care. Increasingly, people enter residential care later in life and with more complex needs. This often requires specialist equipment, larger rooms and sufficient space for two members of staff to safely support individuals while maintaining dignity, privacy and independence. Modern care standards reflect these changing expectations and needs.

It is recognised that some of the same constraints exist to varying degrees in other council-operated homes, and Adult Social Care will continue to consider these issues across its estate. The inclusion of alternative care homes within consultation materials was intended to demonstrate the availability of local provision and should not be interpreted as a recommendation of specific placements.

Questions have also been raised about how the consultation aligns with the Council's vision for Adult Social Care. The consultation sits within a broader strategic ambition, shared nationally across adult social care, to support people to remain independent and living in their own homes for as long as possible. This is reflected in the Council's Promoting Independence and Wellbeing programme and emerging Adult Social Care Strategy. Many people are now supported through a range of community-based services before residential care becomes necessary, meaning that when residential placements are required, they are often for individuals with higher levels of need than was historically the case.

With regard to engagement and consultation arrangements, the Council has undertaken an extensive programme of engagement. This has included six dedicated two-hour drop-in sessions across Windermere, Ambleside, Coniston and Hawkshead, as well as a public meeting requested by the community. These approaches have enabled both public discussion and individual conversations with officers. We have also welcomed engagement from elected members and have supported opportunities for councillors to meet with residents and family members.

In relation to advocacy and support arrangements for residents, independent organisations have been commissioned to assist with the consultation process. Healthwatch has been gathering views from residents, families and the wider public, while Ncompass has been commissioned to provide advocacy support to residents and their families. Where required, Mental Capacity Assessments have been undertaken to ensure individuals receive appropriate support to participate in the consultation. Best Interest processes would only be required if a decision affecting an individual resident were made following the conclusion of the consultation.

Several points have also been made regarding the financial position of Applethwaite Green. While financial sustainability is one factor under consideration, the consultation is not solely driven by budget savings. The Council is examining how best to meet current and future care needs within the context of changing demand, building suitability, workforce challenges and strategic ambitions for Adult

Social Care. It is also important to clarify that there was no approved refurbishment programme specifically scheduled for Applethwaite Green. Whilst investment needs have been recognised for some time, available capital funding across the Care Services estate has historically been insufficient to address all identified requirements, and priority has been given to urgent works elsewhere. Recruitment and retention challenges in the Windermere area have also impacted the home's operational capacity and contribute to its higher cost per resident.

Finally, I would like to reassure you that although the Cabinet report presented prior to consultation identified closure as a preferred option for consideration, Cabinet's decision was to undertake a public consultation on all four options presented. No final decision has been made, and all feedback received during the consultation period will be carefully considered before any recommendation is brought forward.

Thank you for raising these concerns on behalf of your constituents. We remain committed to maintaining an open and transparent consultation process and would be happy to provide a further briefing should this be helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Nikkie Phipps

Director of Care Services
Westmorland and Furness Council

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further questions.

Kind regards

Information Governance Team
Westmorland and Furness Council