

From: Tim Farron <tim@timfarron.co.uk>
Sent: 27 April 2026 15:01
To: MPEnquiries <MPEnquiries@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk>
Cc: Cllr Patricia Bell <patricia.bell@westmorlandandfurness.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

1st June 2026

Dear Mr Farron

Enquiry Response - MP-208822-2026

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 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 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

From: Tim Farron MP
Sent: 11 June 2026 16:20
To: MPEnquiries
Cc: Cllr Patricia Bell
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

Response to Enquiry MP-214524-2026

4 August, 2026

Dear Tim,

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 – Care Services
Adult Social Care | Westmorland & Furness Council

I write to further represent my constituent, [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.

Tim Farron

27 July 2026

Dear Tim

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

Thank you for your email dated 19 June 2026. The comments and feedback that you have sent through have been included as part of the consultation. In particular we note your "deep concern" about the Cabinet papers showing closure of Applethwaite Green as being the "preferred option". This will be included in the consultation findings and feedback for consideration.

It is of note that Cabinet had a "preferred option" for Grisedale Croft, the other Residential Care home that is in consultation at the same time, and this expressed in the Consultation Survey. When Cabinet agreed on the Consultation for Applethwaite Green, the report to Cabinet had a "preferred option of closure, but Cabinet chose to not accept this preferred option and the Consultation for Applethwaite Green does not have a preferred option, but is 4 point open consultation.

You raise in your previous enquiry MP – 208822 – 2026, the suggestion of

"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. "

To which our answer was:

"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."

As you can appreciate the numbers of placements available in Residential care is changeable on a daily basis, and whilst this is an open Consultation on all 4 options, to seek to secure any available

residential placements would undermine this process, and would cause further issues about viability of Applethwaite Green before a decision is made. This would also potentially remove/reserve placements in other homes which would cause a ripple effect in terms of availability, and effect the financial management and viability of other homes if these places were removed from being available and carry an additional financial constraint. If any decision involving existing residents at Applethwaite Green involved them having to relocate (refurbishment, rebuilding or closure) then this would be the time that our Social Work teams and advocates would work with families to find the most suitable placements for residents.

Your comment about relocating all 15 residents together, is noted. We have made provision for Advocacy for residents and their families, through N Compass and Healthwatch for them to contribute to the Consultation. If the decision made at the end of the Consultation involves existing residents to relocate (refurbishment, rebuilding or closure) again we would look at what was appropriate, as some individuals may not wish to relocate together.

Happy to discuss this further if you would like a further briefing?

NP

Tim Farron MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

4 August, 2026

Dear Tim,

Re: Applethwaite Green Care Home Consultation

Thank you for your correspondence of 16 June 2026 on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED], and the Applethwaite Green Community Group regarding the consultation on the future of Applethwaite Green Care Home.

We recognise the strength of feeling within the local community and appreciate the time that residents, families, staff and local people have taken to engage with the consultation. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the questions raised.

Cost of home-based care compared with residential care

The cost of home-based care is determined by an individual's assessed needs and the level of support identified through a Care Act assessment. Westmorland and Furness Council applies standard hourly rates for commissioned home care services. From April 2026 these are:

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

A personal budget is then calculated to meet the person's eligible care and support needs.

As an illustration, a home care package requiring approximately three to four hours of support each day could cost between £560 and £980 per week. Costs can increase significantly where an individual requires intensive support throughout the day and overnight.

By comparison:

- Independent Residential Care placements start from approximately £850.85 per week.
- Care Services Residential placements start from approximately £933.52 per week.

For people with low to moderate support needs, home-based care may be less costly than residential care. However, for those requiring substantial support throughout the day and night, home-based care can exceed the cost of residential provision. The Council's approach is always to base decisions on assessed need, desired outcomes, individual preference and value for money, rather than cost alone.

Monitoring the quality of care

Both home care and residential care services are subject to robust quality assurance and regulatory oversight.

For home care services, providers must be registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and comply with national standards relating to safety, quality and governance. Providers undertake regular staff supervision, training, competency assessments, audits, spot checks and incident monitoring. The Council also monitors commissioned services through contract management arrangements, quality assurance activity, safeguarding processes, complaints monitoring and feedback from people who use services and their families.

Individuals receiving home care are supported through regular reviews of their care and support plans. Where needs change, assessments can be revisited and support adjusted accordingly. Information from care providers, health professionals, family members and the individual themselves contributes to ongoing monitoring and review.

Residential care services are similarly regulated by the CQC and monitored through provider quality assurance processes, local authority contract monitoring and safeguarding procedures. Care homes undertake regular audits, staff supervision, training, medication monitoring and quality improvement activity. Residents' wellbeing is monitored through individual care planning, risk assessments and regular reviews to ensure care continues to meet their needs and desired outcomes.

Any concerns regarding quality, safety or wellbeing, whether in home care or residential care settings, can be raised through established review, complaints or safeguarding procedures and will be appropriately investigated.

The role of "A Place Called Home" within the consultation

The Council's Adult Social Care strategy, "**A Place Called Home**", provides the broader strategic vision for supporting people to live as independently as possible within their own homes and communities where this is appropriate and reflects their needs and wishes.

However, it is important to clarify that "**A Place Called Home**" is not the primary driver of the consultation regarding **Applethwaite Green**. Rather, it provides the policy context within which the future of the service is being considered.

The consultation itself is focused on a range of specific operational challenges affecting Applethwaite Green. These include:

- The age and condition of the building.
- Limitations in meeting modern care requirements and expectations.
- Significant capital investment required to refurbish or replace the facility.
- Workforce challenges.
- Lower occupancy levels than the home's registered capacity.
- The comparatively high cost of operating the service.

The consultation document explains that Applethwaite Green is registered for 27 places but has experienced substantially lower occupancy, resulting in higher costs per resident. It also identifies estimated refurbishment costs of £2.5 million to £3 million, alongside operating costs that are considerably higher than comparable provision.

Accordingly, the consultation should be understood as being driven primarily by these building, operational and financial considerations, while "A Place Called Home" provides the wider strategic framework for the future delivery of adult social care services.

We recognise that decisions about the future of care services are of significant importance to residents, families and communities. The purpose of the consultation is to ensure that all views are heard and considered before any decisions are made. We encourage all interested parties to continue engaging with the consultation process and sharing their perspectives.

I hope this response is helpful in addressing the concerns raised by [REDACTED] and the Applethwaite Green Community Group.

Yours sincerely,

Nikkie Phipps

Director – Care Services
Adult Social Care | Westmorland & Furness Council

04 08 2026

Dear Tim

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 it's 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 – Care Services
Adult Social Care | Westmorland & Furness Council