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Livewell Southwest

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Scrutiny

Overview of the role

Livewell Southwest

- Social Workers and Social Care Practitioners at Livewell Southwest are responsible for delivering statutory adult social care functions on behalf of the organisation. They are required to uphold the Professional Capabilities Framework for Social Work and undertake complex, proportionate, and evidence-based assessments. This includes Mental Capacity Act assessments and Care Act assessments for people whose needs may present significant risks to their wellbeing.
- Practitioners are expected to promote autonomy by supporting individuals to take positive, informed risks wherever appropriate. They also undertake safeguarding enquiries, apply best-interest decision-making, and, when required, make decisions that may restrict a person's liberty in line with statutory frameworks.

Overview of the Workforce

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Adult Social Care comprises:

PCC workforce

- Social Workers
- Community Care Workers
- Team Managers

LSW Workforce

- Social Care Practitioners (non-registered)
- Social Workers
- Practice Educators
- Team Managers (Advanced Practitioners)
- Operational and Service Managers
- Professional and Practice Leadership roles
- Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs)
- Best Interest Assessors (BIAs)
- Mental Capacity Lead
- Adult Social Care Practice Lead

The workforce is organised into two main service areas:

- Mental Health, Learning Disability and Neurodiversity Directorate
- Adult Frailty Specialist Services

These services include a number of specialist teams, such as:

- Livewell Referral and Support Service (LRSS)
- North & West Locality and South & East Locality teams
- Care Home Team
- Intermediate Care Services (Admission Avoidance, Hospital Discharge, Discharge to Assess)
- Safeguarding
- Mental Health and Mental Health Discharge
- Learning Disability
- Drug and Alcohol Team
- Targeted Review Team

WORKFORCE NUMBERS

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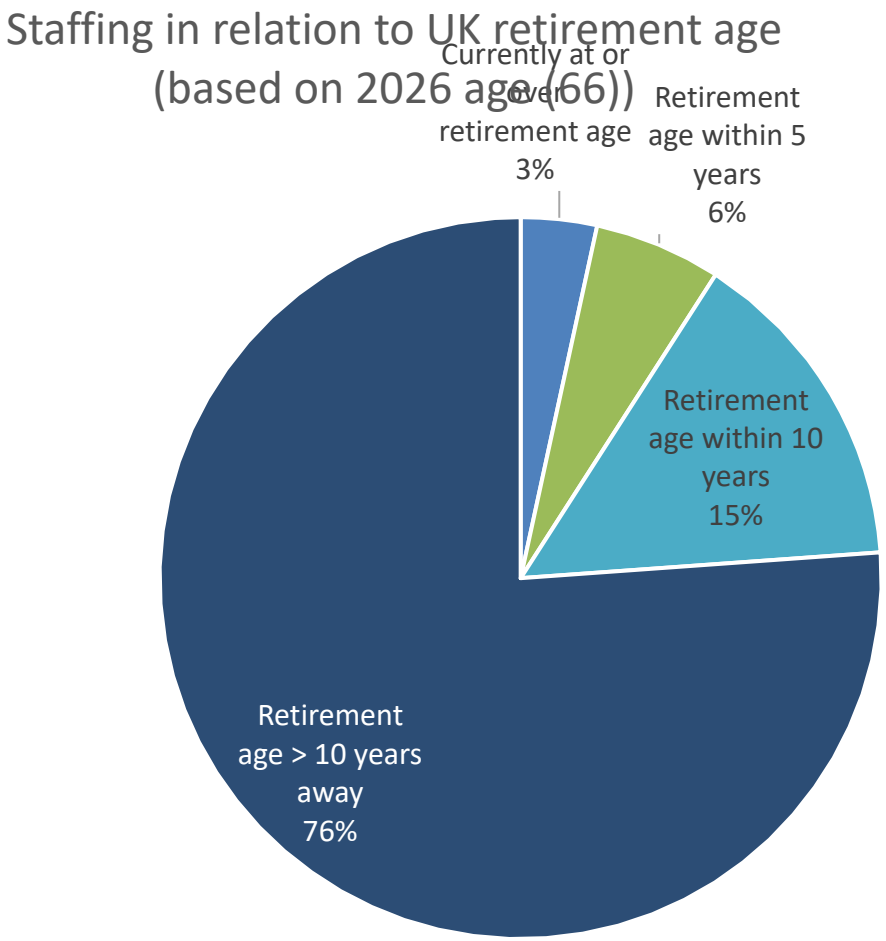
LSW Staffing

143.43 FTE

- 86 Social Workers
- 63 Social Care Practitioners

PCC staffing

- 12.32 FTE



CASELOADS

Livewell Southwest

Caseload expectations vary based on team function, complexity and demand. Approximate caseload ranges (pro rata) are:

- **Community/Locality Teams:** 25–30
- **Care Home Pathway:** 25–30
- **Mental Health & Safeguarding:** 15–25
- **Drug & Alcohol Team:** 15–25
- **Urgent & Intermediate Care (D2A / Crisis Response):** 12–20
- **Integrated Hospital Discharge Team:** 5–10
- **Learning Disability:** 15–20
- **LRSS:** 5–10 triages/referral tasks (typically no long-term allocations)
- **Targeted Review Team:** Dependent on project and nature of reviews
- Caseload allocation decisions are guided by these ranges but informed by team manager oversight, case complexity and time required for each individual.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Livewell Southwest

Strategic Approach

- The **Livewell Southwest Workforce Strategy 2023–2027** acknowledges increasing demand, resource pressures and the need for transformative approaches. The strategy emphasises a "**train, retain, reform**" model and identifies key risks such as skills shortages, recruitment challenges, high workloads, and financial constraints.
- Professional leadership monitors:
- Workforce sustainability
- Projected retirements
- Vacancy trends
- Recruitment patterns
- Opportunities for development and career progression

Partnerships with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

- Livewell maintains strong relationships with HEIs to support student placements, apprenticeship routes and recruitment pipelines. Examples include:
- Engagement in T-Level events promoting social work careers
- Placement partnerships with Plymouth University (Years 1–3)
- Apprenticeships through the Open University (currently four staff enrolled)
- ASYE and Practice Educator collaboration with Bournemouth University
- Naval Social Work student pilot placement (Lincoln University)
- Reciprocal placement arrangements with Devon County Council

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Livewell Southwest

Recruitment Activity

- The Principal Social Worker and Practice Leads participate actively in local recruitment events, including city-wide careers fairs. Recruitment to vacant posts has been consistently successful, with new staff frequently having had student placements at Livewell. The strong ASYE programme further supports attraction—one ASYE social worker won the **Newly Qualified Social Worker of the Year (2025)**.

Retention Measures

- Dedicated Workforce Retention and Attraction Team
- Comprehensive induction programme
- Social Care Practitioner Competency Framework (2024)
- Mandatory training and continuing professional development offer
- Quality assurance and audit processes inform training needs
- Strong supervision culture and practice development support

Career Development Opportunities

- Social Workers have pathways to:
- Leadership programmes
- Best Interest Assessor training
- Approved Mental Health Professional training
- Practice Educator roles
- Specialist training (CHC, MCA, safeguarding, LD, EoL care etc.)
- Access to NHS Leadership Academy

SICKNESS MONITORING

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Sickness absence is monitored through the eRoster system.

January 2026 sickness rates:

	total hours	WTE	Sickness
Care Home team	248.5	6.63	21.85%
Learning Disability	296.0	7.89	0.00%
Mental Health Team	328.5	8.76	34.52%
North and West Locality	434.0	11.57	0.47%
Targeted Review	315.5	8.41	5.39%
Safegaurding	396.3	10.57	17.07%
South and East	446.5	11.91	0.00%
Livewell Referral and Support Service	628.0	16.75	14.55%
Drug and Alcohol team	125.5	3.35	4.05%
Community Crisis Response Team	270.9	7.22	12.05%
Integrated Hospital Discharge team	368.0	9.81	5.62%
Discharge to assess team	1108.5	29.56	8.26%
AMHP	412.5	11.00	10.06%
PCC safeguarding	530	12.32	0.00%

Agency Staff

- **No agency staff** currently deployed in Livewell Adult Social Care.
- **PCC** no current agency staffing

LINKS TO CQC REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY

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Strengths-Based Practice

- Strengths-Based Practice model developed through co-production.
- Training approved and scheduled for rollout.
- Engagement with lived experience groups planned via Wellbeing Hubs.

Reducing Waiting Lists

- Project underway since 2025 with significant reductions achieved.
- OT waiting lists remain a focus with targeted work ongoing.

Improving Carers' Support

- Carers Trust "Triangle of Care" pilot underway (accreditation due March 2026).
- Actions include:
  - Improved reporting on carers at key stages
  - Development of carers information leaflets
  - Updated supervision templates to include informal carers

Transitions

- Cross-service transition programme reviewing pathways, experience and system design.

Workforce Development

- Review of BIA training capacity
- Development of introductory training resources
- Applications made for training (strengths-based practice, CHC, hoarding/self-neglect, practice education)

Governance and Quality Assurance

- Continued focus on QA processes and audit engagement
- Improved data quality via Practice Lead support to performance meetings

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