

Real Life Options Portlethen Housing Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 March 2026

Service provided by:
Real Life Options

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2015342024

About the service

Real Life Options Portlethen is a housing support and care at home service. The service provides support to people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health conditions living in their own homes.

At the time of the inspection 11 people were using the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 19 and 20 March 2026. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included, previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with six people using the service and two family members;
- spoke with members of staff and the management team;
- received online surveys sent out prior to the inspection. We received feedback from one person who used the service and one family member;
- spoke with visiting professionals;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- People experienced person-centred support that reflected what mattered to them and led to positive outcomes.
- People's health and wellbeing needs were being supported very well.
- There were a range of quality assurance tools and processes in place and the management team had very good oversight of the service.
- People were supported by a stable, well-trained and well-supported staff team.
- Personal plans were detailed, person-centred and regularly reviewed.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

People were happy with the care and support they received. One person told us "a lot of my dreams and wishes have come true since I moved here". They also said they felt "happier, healthier and more independent". Family members also spoke positively about the service, with one feeling "really lucky" that their relative was supported by the service, and another saying they were "more than happy" with the care and support provided.

External professionals said the service was "very person centred" and provided individualised support. They said staff understood people's needs, worked well with professional guidance, and supported people effectively to access their local community.

Staff knew people well and individuals were actively involved in making decisions about their day-to-day activities, wellbeing and outcomes. This meant that people were treated with dignity and respect and received person-centred support that reflected their needs.

People had detailed personal plans which contained clear information about their health and wellbeing needs. This enabled staff to understand people's needs and how to support them. For individuals who experienced stress and distress, plans included positive behaviour support strategies and specific guidance to ensure staff used effective approaches. One person at risk from falling had a comprehensive falls folder, containing protocols, guidance, moving and handling plans, and records of each fall. This supported staff to promote the person's safety while maintaining their independence and mobility.

Systems such as daily notes, handovers and online communication logs helped ensure staff were kept up to date. Each person also had an identified keyworker, which promoted continuity of care.

People were supported with their medication in line with their individual needs. Medication procedures were in place, including protocols for administering as required medication. Medication was stored and administered according to prescription labels. As a result, people received safe and effective support with their medication.

People were appropriately supported with their nutritional needs through personalised menu planning, shopping and meal preparation. Personal plans contained clear information about each person's nutritional requirements and the level of support needed. Staff supporting people with dysphagia completed competency checks to ensure they understood and applied the relevant guidance correctly, helping to maintain people's safety and wellbeing.

People benefited from access to meaningful activities and opportunities for community participation. People engaged in a range of activities both at home and within the community, including attending the local men's shed, taking part in community events, and volunteering at a local café. Personal plans contained detailed information about planned activities and identified outcomes, demonstrating how staff supported people to get the most out of their life.

How good is our leadership?**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The management team were visible, approachable and actively involved in the day to day running of the service. They demonstrated a strong understanding and clear oversight of the service and the people being supported.

There were robust quality assurance systems in place that supported continuous improvement. The service had a comprehensive improvement plan that brought together organisational and service-level assurance evidence, audit findings and health and safety information. The plan was regularly reviewed and updated, providing clear evidence of improvements and ensuring timely, effective action.

Accidents and incidents were recorded using a digital system which ensured relevant people were alerted promptly. Records showed clear oversight, updates and actions taken in response to each incident. This meant the service could learn from events and supported a culture of continuous improvement.

Staff had access to policies and procedures through an online system, ensuring they had up to date guidance readily available.

People and families knew how to raise concerns and were confident these would be taken seriously. People were encouraged to be involved in the development of the service. One person told us their suggestions were acted upon, such as having staff rota information provided in photo format. We also heard that people from the service had taken part in the provider's "My Voice" conference, demonstrating a commitment to meaningful involvement.

The provider carried out regular surveys and shared findings with services. Locally, feedback was gathered through keyworker meetings and review processes. The service also produced newsletters providing updates on activities, contact information and relevant organisational news. This helped keep people informed and connected.

How good is our staff team?**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The service benefited from a stable and consistent staff team, including relief staff who covered shifts when needed. Staffing levels met people's assessed needs which meant staff had sufficient time to provide care and support, engage meaningfully with people and support them to achieve their outcomes. People experienced positive relationships and consistent support because core staff knew them well and understood their routines and preferences.

Staff spoke positively about working in the service. They told us they felt well supported and knew who to approach for advice. One person told us staff were approachable and friendly, and that "they were always there" if they needed to speak to someone. Staff also said they could contact the manager at any time if they needed support. On call arrangements were also in place which ensured support was available when management were not on site.

Staff worked well together as a team and regular team meetings kept them informed and up to date with key information about the service.

People could be confident that staff were competent, well supported and appropriately trained. An induction programme helped new staff become familiar with the service and with the people they would be supporting. Staff completed a range of training relevant to their roles, ensuring they had the skills and knowledge to meet people's needs. Supervision and annual appraisals took place, and the management team had begun to introduce more direct observations of practice to support learning and development.

Safe recruitment procedures were followed, which meant people could be confident that staff were recruited safely.

How well is our care and support planned?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Each person had a comprehensive and individualised personal plan. People and families told us their plans supported them to do what mattered to them, and they felt fully involved in developing and reviewing their care and support. Personal plans clearly recorded who had contributed to their development.

Personal plans were held online, with copies of key documents also available in people's homes. Plans contained personalised information, including one page profiles. Where restrictive practices were in place, these were clearly recorded. People also had hospital passports and, where appropriate anticipatory care plans, demonstrating a proactive approach to meeting people's changing needs.

Each person had a designated keyworker who supported them to be involved in their plan and reviews. One person told us they had "full input" into their review and met with their keyworker weekly to reflect on what had gone well and what had not.

People were supported to get the most out of life, and their outcomes were recorded and regularly reviewed. One person proudly shared their achievements, including becoming more independent when travelling and gaining certificates and qualifications. We also heard about someone who had been supported to go on a "holiday of a lifetime" to New York.

Regular reviews were held to discuss people's support needs. People, families and external professionals were involved, and the people we spoke to confirmed this. Reviews covered key areas and progress towards outcomes. There was a strong focus on people's experiences, including what they wanted to improve and what was working well. This meant people were meaningfully involved in their support and had plans that truly reflected their needs, preferences and aspirations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	5 - Very Good

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